





संतीकेतन मा व्योतिर्गमय

SANTINIKETAN  
VISWABHARATI  
LIBRARY.

824

C836

(१५८ Copy)

# FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM



# **FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM**

## **ESSAYS**

**BY**

**JAMES H. COUSINS**

**MADRAS  
GANESH & CO  
1919**

Printed by Thompson & Co., at the "Minerva Press,"  
33, Popham's Broadway, Madras.

**BY THE SAME AUTHOR.**

New Ways in English Literature	...	1	0	0
Kingdom of Youth	...	0	8	0
Garland of Life	...	1	0	0
Renaissance in India	...	2	0	0
Ode of Truth	...	0	8	0
King's Wife	...	1	0	0
Moulted Feathers	...	0	8	0

---

**GANESH & Co., PUBLISHERS, MADRAS.**



## CONTENTS.

---

<b>Introductory</b>	...	1
Dante Alighieri (1265—1321)	...	9
Edmund Burke (1729—1797)	...	16
William Wordsworth (1770—1850)	...	23
Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792—1822)	...	31
John Stuart Mill (1806—1873)	...	38
Walt Whitman (1819—1892)	...	44
Henry Bryan Binns (1878— )	...	51
Irish Bards and Ballard Makers	...	58
<b>ISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS :—</b>		
The Limits of Brotherhood	...	69
Nationalism and Internationalism	...	73
Imperial Reconstruction	...	76
The Policy of the Open Door	...	82
The Science and Art of Co-operation	...	87
Dietetics and Diet-Ethics	...	100
The Artist as Reformer	...	110
The Philosophic Basis of Food Reform	...	114
The Relationship of Culture and Training in Education	...	126
Christianity and Indian Education	...	144
On Inspiration in Literature	...	149
How the Mountains Came to Be	...	155
Psychical Research and Religious Thought.	...	157
Religious Unity	...	171
The Soul : Evolution...	...	176



# FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

## INTRODUCTORY

IT was once held in Britain as a political axiom that a nation could not be made sober by Act of Parliament. It was quite true while the "nation" was *not* a Nation, but a loosely held mob of warring selfish interests such as was the state of Europe prior to August, 1914.

When the Great War began, those who were deeply interested in the purification and elevation of public and private life through the medium of various reforms, were face to face with stone walls. The age-long struggle of the working classes in England for an adequate recognition of their true place in the national household had come to a danger point through the fear of politicians to deal drastically with vested interests. The fight for the enfranchisement of women had been driven by the obtuseness of politicians to a stage at which something horrible seemed to be the only possible expression of exasperated and suppressed womanhood. The work of seven centuries of aspiration and sacrifice by the Irish Nation, carried to an apparently satisfactory conclusion

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

in an Act of Parliament, was rendered null and void by the bigoted frenzy of party leaders on one hand, and the supineness and lack of sincerity of the party nominally in power ; and out of the folly of the " rulers " two unauthorised, fanatically earnest mobs of armed men were ready to precipitate on the British Isles a Civil War compared with which, in regard to moral results, the European War was a masked blessing.

In the less spectacular but not less important phases of humanitarian effort for pure living, noble thought carried into noble action in relation to human and sub-human beings, public interest and sympathy was a microscopic fraction. The excitements of cruel or silly sports, the sentimentalities of picture houses, the vulgarities of music halls, were the mental and emotional pabulum of the great majority of the British people ; and the nominal idea of freedom was—"every man for himself, and the Devil take the hindmost."

To-day, with four years of warfare between us and the stone-wall age of social evolution, a change has come about that the most optimistic reformer would hardly have dated nearer than ten years in its ripest phases, and half a century in general. The working-classes have been swept into vast defensive organisations, and in the General Election have polled almost as many votes for the Labour Party as were polled for

## INTRODUCTORY

the late all-powerful Liberal Party ; the dreams of the nationalising of various public services have been turned into accepted reality in a few days ; the early-Victorian line that a few survivals from that dull era had drawn around "woman's sphere," has been carried around an area of activity that would make their grandfathers' wigs turn grey ; the sons of fathers who were laughed to scorn, because they advocated abstention from the flesh of animals, have in turn laughed, quietly and with solemn thankfulness, at the public request of the Government that meat-eating should be reduced, and the suddenly discovered knowledge by savants that flesh food was the dearest and poorest of dietetic substances.

Were it possible to assure an inquisitive visitor from Mars that these revolutionary changes had been deliberately brought about through a general recognition of their rightness, then, indeed, we should have announced the beginning of the longed-for millennium, when "all men's good" shall be "each man's rule," and woman's also. Alas ! we can only assure our planetary visitor that these signs of dawning sanity in the conduct of human affairs are the result, not of reason from within, but of stern necessity from without. The "discipline of War," as the *Pall Mall Gazette* put it, advanced stage by stage, even—*mirabile dictu*!—to the drinking habits of Londoners, a measure of interference with

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

the once vaunted "liberty of the subject" that "will bear most directly on the life of the community.....a heavy sacrifice upon certain branches of trade, as well as a curtailment of individual liberty that may often amount to genuine inconvenience."

To sober India, with its restraint on appetite, the social state disclosed by such words as the foregoing must be at least a puzzle. The idea that liberty is dependent on a man's perfect freedom to put inflammatory liquors into his mouth is one of the quaintest distortions of western individualism. It is echoed from newspaper and rostrum, when any attempt is made to legislate against various evils, despite the great principle laid down in Christian doctrine that "no man liveth unto himself." Yet, in the face of outraged "freedom," the War has forced on the British people a new and very vivid sense of the inter-dependence of the human units comprising the nation: it has shown in the glare of shells that a nation *can* be made sober—and many other things, even vegetarian—by Act of Parliament, when that nation realises that the good or ill of one is the good or ill of all.

True liberty will never be found in an anarchic claim of every atom to do as it pleases, but in the willingness of the atoms to devote their single wills to the general good. Horrible as the War was, if it

## INTRODUCTORY

served to drive this truth into human consciousness, it will be remembered, not as the collapse of civilisation—which never existed in reality—but as the beginning of the real civilisation that sees the solidarity of all life, and makes war for ever impossible between persons or nations, through eliminating the spurious “freedom” that is only an exaggerated selfishness. Yet, while long steps towards freedom have been smitten out of British legislators, it would be untrue to attribute these solely to necessity. No nation can walk straight into reform. There is always a preparation; and I propose, in the following pages, to point out a few of the Footsteps of Freedom in English literature, mainly in the poets, who are specially responsive to impressions from ‘principalities and powers’ beyond the horizon of the ordinary individual.

At the centenary celebrations to the memory of the Irish patriot-poet, Thomas Davis, Mr. W. B. Yeats—the greatest living poet in the English language—told an interesting story of how another patriot-poet, or, rather, poetess, discovered the political ballads of Davis, and through them became an apostle of freedom for Ireland. The story, which Mr. Yeats heard from her own lips, is that when the poetess was a girl, she had to step into a shop to let a procession pass. The procession, however, seemed interminable, and the girl’s curiosity moved her to ask what it meant.

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

"It is the funeral of Thomas Davis," the shopman replied. "And who was Thomas Davis?" she asked. "He was a poet," was the answer.

The girl was so struck to see such honour done by one section of her fellow-countrymen and women to a mere poet of whom she had not heard, that she studied his writings, and ultimately came out of the limitations of her upbringing, became fired with the cause of Irish Freedom, in the fight for which Davis had died before he was forty, and took up his work of vivifying the imagination of the people of Ireland by patriotic poetry. That girl became Lady Wilde, "Speranza," whose work is known the world over.

The cause of human freedom needs the inspiration and the curb of the poet. There is a deep-seated need for the clarifying, and intensification under control, of the emotional nature of humanity the world over, when that emotional nature is stirred to unusual activity in the crises that mark the pressure of the Spirit towards human unity by the only path, the path of freedom. When that need arises, then also comes the day of the poet, not only as articulator of the incoherent, but also as shaper, taking up the scattered and indeterminate vibrations of the mass, and singing them into a living, conscious, effective purpose through the restraints of art that curb extravagance yet intensify pure emotion.

## INTRODUCTORY.

There is another story of how a bed-ridden young man killed time by reading a book of Davis' patriotic ballads. Instead of killing time, the book made him alive with a new purpose. I saw that man in his old age with bright, enthusiastic eyes that were keenly interested in the new national movement in literature. He was John O'Leary, and he had put behind him five years of imprisonment, and fifteen years of banishment from his native land, as the outcome of a sick-bed perusal of a book of songs. And O'Leary was only one of many thousands who caught fire from the torch of freedom in the hands of a poet.

I do not mention this with a view to forming a Society of Poets for Chanting Men into Prison ! Rather, the poets are they who sing the world out of prison—out of the bonds that humanity puts upon its will and imagination, for this or that trivial selfishness. To be sure, they may, on the way to liberty, pass incidentally through stone walls and iron bars, but such events are only part of the day's work, and the work is beyond the day.

Every poet must, to some degree, be a champion of Freedom, because Freedom is the necessary condition for the realisation of Beauty. Seers who have glimpsed the Beauty of the Spirit, which is behind its partial and fluctuant reflections in the arts, have taught that its realisation is possible only when freedom is

## **FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM**

gained from the domination of outside disturbance, and from interior deflection to the side of the lower nature. Every poet realises this as a simple statement of the conditions necessary for the expression of his own genius; and what is it also but a statement of the case for national freedom?—freedom from the vexatious wastage of energy, and the disruption of attention, that come from the perpetual and unnecessary adjustments between any nation's genius and extraneous unassimilable interests; freedom to lift itself above the clamourous necessities of the lower side of life, by finding the poise and harmony of self-realisation and self-expression.

The Universe is God's poem, which He is shaping towards His ideal by rewriting, so to speak, and sometimes cutting out, the cantos that are nations, and the stanzas that are human beings. Every step towards freedom is in need of song for its guidance and inspiration: every song that is worthy of the great name of poetry is a chant of liberty.

## DANTE ALIGHIERI (1265—1321)

THE Italy of Dante was not the Italy of to-day. Columbus and his lucky stumble against a new world were still a couple of centuries off. Overseas Imperialism had not been invented, nor the blessed formula as to finding markets; and the energy that had built the empire of the Cæsars had dwindled to a faction fight between Ghibelline and Guelph.

Dante was born a Guelph, a hereditary supporter of the Pope. At thirty-five he was condemned to death by Pope Boniface in the event of his returning to his native city of Florence. Between these two events there is the story of a great soul that heard the footsteps of freedom, and followed them.

As a member of the noble family of Alighieri, Dante received the best education that his age could afford, and became a master of literature and science. At twenty-four he earned distinction on the field of battle, and he attained statesman rank in his sect. It was at his advice that the leaders of the sub-sects, into which the Guelph's split in 1300, were banished. Strange to say, it was this very act that precipitated the crisis of his life, and led to his own banishment. The leader of the Bianchi sub-sect, which wavered towards the Ghibellines, the upholders of the crown

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

in succession from the Cæsars, returned to Florence. Thereupon the Neri sub-sect, with which Dante was more intimately associated, appealed to the Pope, who secured the help of a brother to the King of France into whose hands Florence ultimately fell. The Bianchi leader was thrown into prison, and a decree of banishment was promulgated against six hundred of her best citizens, including Dante.

It was quite in keeping with the irony of the destiny that pursued him all his life, that his banishment threw him amongst the rejected Bianchi as a companion in misfortune. For this he was castigated by his former friends, the Neri. But the fact is that Dante was neither a Guelph nor a Ghibelline in his heart. He perceived that the animosities of the various partisans were simply providing the occasion for the sundering of what should be the constituent elements of a Nation. That weakness was being taken advantage of by the Papacy in order to secure temporal as well as spiritual power. It was the old, but ever new method of "divide and conquer."

Dante set himself against the encroachment on the secular rights of the people. Italy for the Italians was his idea, and it was for opposing Pope Boniface's introduction of foreigners into Florence that Dante incurred the pontifical displeasure. To that extent he was less a Guelph; to which must be added his loyalty to

## DANTE ALIGHIERI

the successors of Caesar. But this defect from his heredity did not make him more a Ghibelline ; rather, he despised their mere lip service to the Crown, which he saw to be pure party expediency. The natural result of his attitude was political isolation, as it is written in the *Paradiso* :

Of their bestiality their own proceedings  
Shall furnish proof ; so 'twill be well for thee  
A party to have made thee by thyself.

This Party of One had a single ideal, the attainment of national unity, not a struggle against overt invasion or covert denationalisation, but a struggle to bring the members of a body corporate into harmony. Bearing this in mind, we shall find the true perspective of Dante's political creed. In the *Convito* he says : " Since the human mind, in limited possession of earth, does not rest, but ever desires to obtain glory, as we see by experience, wars and discords successively arise between kingdoms." Wherefore, in order to do away with these wars and their causes, he advocates a single monarch—*Imperadore*—as the focal centre of national unity.

To-day the cause of human freedom has subtler and deeper meanings. None the less, from the store of wisdom out of which the " Poet whose unscarred feet have trodden Hell" made his attack upon the point nearest his hand, we too may gain guidance

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

and for that guidance we have to turn to the utterance that came from the most profound strata of his nature : "The Comedy of Dante Alighieri, a Florentine by nation, but not by habits," as he himself described the immortal work that others later called "The Divine Comedy".

It was in the midst of the turmoils of that epoch-making thirty-fifth year of his life that he conceived the idea of composing a poem through which he might expose the corruptions of his age and country. Like his great compeer in theological epic, Milton, he put his art to the service of what he conceived to be a worthy purpose : not the colossal daring of the Puritan, to "justify the ways of God to men," but to convict men of sin, so that they should seek reconciliation with God.

In carrying out this great purpose, Dante had occasion to make repeated reference to personal and historical details ; but it is not to these or to any systematic statement of his political convictions that we shall look, but rather to a few scattered phrases that are the unpremeditated disclosure of the inner man from which the man of deed and word can be deduced.

Perhaps his most penetrating definition of the force at work in human effort is the statement in the *Convito* that

## DANTE ALIGHIERI

"Everything desires its own perfection...and for this is everything desired."

To this he adds in the *Paradiso* :

"The natural was ever without error."

Here we have, surely, an absolute statement of human freedom, a complete anarchism, squarely based on Dante's belief that God and the universe were one, and that humanity was potential Divinity.

O human creatures, born to soar aloft,

Why fall ye thus before a little wind ?

he cries in one place, and in another he queries,

Do ye not comprehend that we are worms

Born to bring forth the angelic butterfly ?

To the attainment of that evolution every power must be consecrated: there is no delegation of the work : there is a touch of contempt in his glance in Furgatory at those shades

Who only prayed that someone else may pray

So as to hasten their becoming holy.

But Dante, having, as he declares, become enamoured—after his first love, the immortalised Beatrice—with "the most beautiful and modest daughter of the Emperor of the Universe, to whom Pythagoras gave the name of Philosophy," was not likely to miss the other side of evolutionary truth, that the seeking of personal perfection' must at every step take account of the multitudinous other entities

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

that have an equal right to desire and strive for their own perfection. And so he enunciates his law of co-operation:

...As much the more as one says *Our*,  
So much the more of good each one possesses.

In another place he puts into the mouth of his conductor through the Inferno, Virgil, the clear admonition,

Of those things only should one be afraid  
Which have the power of doing others harm.

How much he had himself suffered from the failure of others to observe this rule may be told in a few words. After fifteen years of exile, he was offered the opportunity to return to his native city on condition that, in addition to paying a fine, he should make an apology to the State, and so admit the justice of his banishment. He spurned the offer with indignation, and he never again knew the joy of home. At fifty-seven he died of disappointment and bodily strain.

To him, as to every seer, there was one medium for the reconciliation of all life's contradictions—Love made perfect in Freedom. Personal ambition, thought unsweetened by sympathy, these are the menaces to individual or collective happiness:

For where the argument of intellect  
Is added unto evil will and power,  
No rampart can the people make against it.

Love only can make the crooked straight and the

DANTE ALIGHIERI

rough places plain; and it must be no petty sentiment, but a full and free exercise of a noble spirit that takes away all suspicion of patronage and alien tyrannous suzerainty in the unit or the mass, and that errs—as Peter in the *Purgatorio* commanded the keeper of the

Rather in opening than in keeping shut ;  
a rule of action which may be commended to those in  
whose hands are the keys to the outer Courts of  
human Freedom.

### **EDMUND BURKE (1729—1797)**

**EDMUND BURKE** was born in Dublin, the child of a Protestant father and a Catholic mother. He lived through the period of upheaval that culminated a year after his death in the Irish Rebellion of "ninety-eight", but close enquiry would have to be made in order to find a clear trace of his ancestry in his speeches and writings ; he lives in university textbooks as England's greatest political philosopher ; and he is enshrined in the affection of America for his strenuous opposition to the tyranny of the home Parliament, and of India for his impassioned championship of her cause in the bad old days of the East India Company. The latter, including the impeachment of Warren Hastings, he regarded as his best service to the cause of justice. His life he dedicated to the furtherance of freedom, order and kindness. Wherever he found their opposites he entered the lists against them—yet he always did so with a caution and a verbal circumambulation that carried his work to the outer verge of political utterance, but never beyond it into the region of abandonment to the cause of Freedom.

It was this mixture of radical and conservative in his nature that brought about the great paradox of his career. When the first French revolutionary out-

### **EDMUND BURKE**

break took place in 1789, Burke, by reason of his own revolutionary attitude to the English Government and Parliamentary institutions, had achieved such a reputation as a political Don Quixote that he was written of as “a man decried, persecuted, proscribed, and by half the nation considered as little better than an ingenious madman”. But the personalities and methods of the French revolutionaries, and a sentimental memory of Marie Antoinette, coupled with his abhorrence of violence other than in words, denied him any comprehension of the emotion which must be the natural accompaniment of any such upheaval, and, like Wordsworth later, he found himself in the position of a critic and opponent of the Revolution. He wrote a letter : it was published, and immediately the “ingenious madman” became a wise man, favoured of kings, and applauded by the public. No one ever doubted his honesty ; but if they had, his open breaking in the House of Commons of a twenty years friendship with Fox would have dispelled the doubt.

It was this stern, unyielding and humourless honesty in his thought, that gave his utterances a value that has passed them on to other times and circumstances. How much more valuable they would have been had he united the vision of the mystic to the intellectual grasp of the statesman is a matter for speculation ; but

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

it is obvious all through that his temperamental or adopted abhorrence of anything in the way of "metaphysics" kept him at the level of perpetual opposition, and prevented his seizure of occasion and power for great construction. With all his oratorical ability he fell short of leadership, because his honesty had something of arrogance in it, and his championship of freedom had a touch of tyranny.

Something of the conservatism that acted as drag to his genius comes out in the very first sentence of his *Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents* which he published as a young man of thirty. He emphasises the delicacy of his undertaking, and anticipates what other people will think and say. Ultimately he admits that "in the exercise of duty something has to be hazarded," though he puts a limit to the hazard in the phrase, "reputation, the most precious possession of every individual."

Then follows one of those clear enunciations of political wisdom that are applicable in all human relationships, and especially to those who are engaged in any phase of the age-long struggle of the Soul of Humanity towards Freedom :

"Nations are not primarily ruled by laws : less by violence. Whatever original energy may be exposed either in force or regulation, the operation of both is, in truth, merely instrumental. Nations are governed by..."

EDMUND BURKE

a knowledge of their temper, and a judicious management of it."

He thus sets the government of a people largely on the character of both the governors and the governed, and thus takes more cognisance of the human element than of statute-books—as he elsewhere specifically declares. Consequently he was removed from any undue reverence for the printed word of Law, and was free to detect the subtle influences of human desire and selfishness under the guise of spurious reforms. He points out that a system may be adopted which will exalt the grandeur of the State, and yet be inimical to freedom ;

" and men may find, in the pride and splendour of that prosperity, some sort of consolation for the loss of their solid privileges. Indeed, the increase of the power of the State has often been urged by artful men as a pretext for some abridgement of the public liberty....."

a shrewd thrust whose point comes through a century and a half to the present time, when the liberties of England have, through the exigencies of warfare, suffered a temporary suspension in the hour of external menace, and stand in danger of a continued contraction in favour of the exploiting classes whose progenitors were in Burke's mind when he said :

"A species of men to whom a state of order would be a sentence of obscurity, are nourished into a dangerous magnitude by the heat of intestinal disturbance ; and it

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

is no wonder that, by a sort of sinister piety, they cherish, in their turn, the disorders which are the parents of all their consequences."

It is not easy to surmise how far Burke's habit of thought would have taken him if he were alive now ; but his speech in relation to the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act during the American War has a close application to-day. He said :

" Liberty, if I understand it at all, is a general principle, and the clear right of all the subjects within the realm, or of none. Partial freedom seems to me the most insidious mode of slavery. But, unfortunately, it is the kind of slavery most easily admitted in times of civil discord ; for parties are but too apt to forget their own future safety in their desire of sacrificing their enemies.....In times of high proceeding it is never the faction of the predominant power that is in danger ; for no tyranny chastises its own instruments."

The problem here involved, the clash of immediate necessity with remote contingency, of freedom in the individual with government by class, was the crux towards the solution of which Burke laboured all his life. He saw it from two sides, and he perceived that magnanimity was the only possible medium of rapprochement. "A great Empire and little minds go ill together," he said, and his desire for largeness of dealing between Britain and its dependencies stung from him the bitter question,

### EDMUND BURKE

in reply to a speech by the youthful Lord Carmarthen on the subject of American taxation :

"When this child of ours wishes to assimilate to its parent, and to reflect with a true filial resemblance the beauteous countenance of British liberty ; are we to .....give them our weaknesses for strength ? our opprobrium for glory ? and the slough of slavery, which we are not able to work off, to serve them for freedom?"

Small wonder, then, that Burke's blood boiled—as a contemporary declared—over the question of India. He charged the East India Company with "selling" every Indian Prince that they had come in contact with, and breaking every treaty that they had made, which were offences against common honesty, but he gave his special scorn to the alleged reformers who seemed, in their advocacy of Indian matters, "to have forgotten that they had anything to do but to regulate the tenants of a manor, or the shopkeepers of the next country town."

Burke strove earnestly for order and stability, but he recognised that "a State without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation." In the human units that were the embodiments of both principles he saw the barrier of inertia, and the fire of emotion that might be a consuming frenzy or a clear light. "It is sometimes," he said, "as hard to compel slaves to be free as to compel freemen to be slaves" ; and again, "Would twenty shillings

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

have ruined Mr. Hampden's fortune ? No ! But the payment of half twenty shillings, on the principle on which it was demanded, would have made him a slave."

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850)

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH was born 22 years before Shelley and lived 28 years after him. They were contemporary only in time, however, in temperament and expression they were poles apart. Wordsworth spoke of Shelley's poetry in terms that came as near blasphemy as his laborious instrument would permit. In that, he was no nearer the truth than Shelley was when he humbly extinguished his own light in the presence of Byron, whom he altogether wrongly regarded as a superior luminary.

On one point, however, Wordsworth and Shelley coincided in time and spirit : they loved Freedom, and hailed what they believed at first to be her supreme manifestation in the French upheaval that began in 1789, and has not yet subsided. Indeed, in the very year in which Shelley was born, 1792, Wordsworth, then twenty-two years of age, while visiting Paris, would have taken up the work of a leader of the moderate republican party, had he not been summoned home to England.

At that period he was already known to himself, but to few beside, as a Poet born. He had also passed from the phase of simple nature-worship to that of human sympathy. In another year England declared

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

war on France, and Wordsworth declared war on England in prose and verse. His passion for freedom was outraged by his country's attack on the apostles of freedom.

Wordsworth, however, by reason of his appallingly serious disposition, and his entire deprivation of the rejuvenating power of humour, aged rapidly. At twenty-eight he began to do ponderously in poetry what the great Italian craftsman, Cellini, says a person should only begin to do in prose at forty—write his autobiography. It was in Germany in 1798-99 that he began the song of himself, “The Prelude.” Simultaneously, and quite naturally, as the result of his pre-occupation with his own history, he lost his early enthusiasm for the struggle for liberty, and ultimately raged as much against France as he had formerly raged against England.

While this defection was temperamental, it found its immediate causes—some have said excuses—in the excesses of the revolutionaries, who, as he says in “The Prelude,”

for desperate ends

Had plucked up mercy by the roots...

The old tyranny of the aristocrat was succeeded by “capricious acts of tyranny,” such as the chasing of all Negroes out of France. These things, and many more told of in Book X of “The Prelude,” striking on

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

a sensitive and introspective genius, made it recoil from its earlier interest. We can gauge somewhat the measure of this recoil if we set the crude facts of unrestrained violence against the dreams of the young Poet :

Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy !  
For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood  
Upon our side, we who were strong in love !  
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very heaven! - Oh ! times,  
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways  
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once  
The attraction of a country in romance !  
When Reason seemed the most to assert her  
rights . . . .  
. . . . Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,  
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!  
But in the very world, which is the world  
Of all of us,—the place where in the end  
We find our happiness, or not at all !

But while the Poet moved away from the concrete expression of the struggle for freedom then concentrated in France, his allegiance to freedom in the abstract was in no degree impaired ; it was, indeed, driven deeper, as his philosophical nature deepened, in search of the hidden roots of tyranny, and in its search it came upon the salutary truth that in his own land both historically and contemporaneously there were conditions that made its boast of freedom take on an apologetic air. The most that he could muster courage to claim for her, according to the twenty-first sonnet in his

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

“ Poems dedicated to National Independence and Liberty,” was that her enemy, France, was more abject than she.

Ten years later, as far as his published utterance is concerned, he had got to the core of the matter : he had found that the source of all things is within, and that the contributory cause of the strength of tyranny is the weakness of the slave. “ Never may from our souls one truth depart,” he prays—

That an accursed thing it is to gaze  
On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye ;  
Nor—touched with due abhorrence of *their*  
guilt  
For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood is  
spilt,  
And justice labours in extremity—  
*Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,*  
*O wretched man, the throne of tyranny !*

It is well for human progress that truth remains true, despite the falsities that make up the compromise of life. We may look to Wordsworth for the enunciation of the obvious truth of the last two lines of the foregoing sonnet ; but it is with little surety that we should look to him for guidance in the matter of putting the truth into practice, for even a superficial knowledge of human nature will teach us that any concerted and determined attempt to shake tyranny from his throne (such as the revolution to-day in Europe) is pretty sure

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

at the present low state of human evolution to result in circumstances not very dissimilar to those which alienated his sympathy from the revolutionary movement in France.

There is, of course, the alternative of a persistent pressure in line with the evolutionary tendency of things, but the genius of Wordsworth was not in that direction. He shrank from the closeness and harshness of struggle, even along constitutional lines, and sought refuge in solitude with the "vision splendid."

The world is too much with us, late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers,  
he complained. Unfortunately it is the fate of most human beings to have to struggle perpetually at the *getting* process, in order to meet the rudimentary necessities of life, because those necessities, instead of being freely distributed, are made the subject of heartless exploitation by commercial tyrants. Here we have the raw material of the universal urge towards economic freedom, of which the struggle for national freedom is but a phase. Its solution lies in sterner work than settling down in a cottage by the side of a lake.

It was this rather self-satisfied renunciation of his first enthusiasm for liberty that drew abuse upon him. To-day we are more merciful, for we have learned not only that "they also serve who only stand and wait," but that the truest service that one can render to one's

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

fellows is to follow one's own genius and illumination. The *dharma* of the warrior may be the dharma of the poet, as in the case of Byron, but more likely it may not. Sidney and Lovelace may write verses and wield the sword with equal effect ; but Wordsworth was a man of one purpose, and that purpose was poetry. The footsteps of Freedom caught his inner ear, but they spoke to him rather of the ultimate conditions of her full life, than of the immediate way thereto. "I grieved for Buonaparte," he said, but he passed in four lines from the little Corsican to the powers that make such as he possible and impossible :

'Tis not in battles that from youth we train  
The Governor who must be wise and good,  
And temper with the sternness of the brain  
Thoughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.  
Wisdom doth live with children round her  
knees :  
Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk  
Man holds with week-day man in the hourly  
walk  
Of the mind's business : these are the degrees .  
By which true Sway doth mount ; this is the  
stalk  
True Power doth grow on ; and her rights are  
these.

And so it has come about that Wordsworth enjoys the paradoxical fate of living in a certain solid and rather carpeted and stuffy quietude in his own works,

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

and of being buried in a sonnet by one contemporary,  
to which is added an epitaph by another.

In honest poverty thy voice did weave  
Songs consecrate to truth and liberty.  
Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,  
Thus, having been, that thou shouldst cease  
to be,

Shelley lamented.

Just for a handful of silver he left us ;  
Just for a riband to stick in his coat,  
Browning added bitterly, and unfairly.

Fortunately for humanity, the great assets of the eternal Spirit suffer no derogation from the defects of mortals, either in falling from grace or in delivering judgment, in the eyes of those who seek only the Ideal. Fortunately, too, the final truth, especially in relation to freedom which is essentially incapable of entire statement, is not necessarily to be looked for where its name is most on the lips. Freedom, indeed, is a shy bird : it may slip round a corner when the fowler spreads his nets in its sight ; yet it builds its nest in curious crannies of the heart and imagination. Out of the thousand fragments of truth concerning freedom that Wordsworth quarried from his brain it is doubtful if anything but a very meagre temple to the Goddess could be constructed; yet the whole essence of the matter slipped almost casually into a phrase about a flower, when he declared that it fulfilled its functions.

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

perfectly “ because the little flower is free down to its roots”; free—as a flower, not as an elephant, down to its own authentic source, not to the source of a river.

That is the whole Gospel of Freedom—that human beings should be set at liberty to express themselves to the full extent of their own capabilities as individuals and as groups of individuals, subject to the natural limitations of spirits clothed in matter and set in relationship to one another. That such was Wordsworth’s summary of the matter, deducible from his writings, may be taken as ratified in his obvious acceptance of Cowley’s definition of Liberty which he uses as the motto to his own lines on the subject :

“ The liberty of a people consists in being governed by laws which they have made for themselves, under whatever form it be of government ; the liberty of a private man, in being master of his own time and actions, as far as may consist with the laws of God and of his country.”

A century of progress in the idea of freedom has widened the word “ people” to include women as well as men, for it is now seen that a condition of eligibility for the freedom of a nation is the readiness of that nation to grant freedom to all within its borders.

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, 1792-1822

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, the son and heir of broad acres and titled nobility, was born a rebel against privilege and class distinction. The passion for freedom was the ruling motive of his nativity. He had hardly begun to think, when he perceived that the function of legislation, to which his class raised its silk hat, had not come within hailing distance of the one true justification for its existence—the power to smile at precedent, and to adjust its findings to the growing soul of humanity—but simply existed as a producer of statutes for dealing with immediate circumstances ; and then canonised such statutes, so that they became ghostly tyrants when their provocative cause had passed away. Hence he who might have enjoyed the privileges of respectable nonentity, and become one among the law-makers of his age, chose the thorny and heroic way of the iconoclast, the breaker of laws for their remaking “ nearer to the heart’s desire.”

It was at school that Shelley got his first glimpses of the spirit of tyranny, and his first impulses towards freedom. Up till his eighth year he had enjoyed the light discipline of home life, and particularly the free

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

comradeship of his sisters. From the fresh air of full human life he was transplanted to the thick atmosphere of a boys' school, with its lop-sidedness, its deprivation of the intuitive discipline and chivalric companionship of femininity, its little meannesses and slaveries that belong to segregated callow masculinity. His schoolmates noted something in him that set him apart from their breed, and they came down on him as wild birds do on a "sport" in their species. Something of this preliminary stage of his lifelong quarrel with human society, as then organised, is disclosed in the dedication, years afterwards, of "The Revolt of Islam" to his wife, Mary Godwin :

Thoughts of great deeds were mine, dear friend,  
when first

The cloud which wraps this world from youth did  
pass.

I do remember well the hour which burst  
My spirit's sleep : a fresh May-morn it was,  
When I walked forth upon the glittering grass,  
And wept, I knew not why ; *until there rose*  
*From the near schoolroom, voices, that, alas !*  
*Were but one echo from a world of woes—*  
*The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.*

But the discovery of the law of correspondences in the little world of school and the big world outside did not damp his spirit : quite the contrary.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

And then I clasped my hands and looked around—  
But none was near to mock my streaming eyes,  
Which poured their warm drops on the sunny  
ground—

So without shame I spake : “ I will be wise,  
And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies  
Such power, for I grow weary to behold  
The selfish and the strong still tyrannise  
Without reproach or check.” I then controlled  
My tears, my heart grew calm, and I was meek  
and bold.

At the age of eighteen he entered University College at Oxford, felt the reflex there of the spirit of liberty which the French Revolution had let loose in the world, and became at once an ardent exponent of its most extreme teachings. The ignorance and inconsistencies of the followers of the orthodox Church roused the rebel within him. The doctrine of the atheistic French school presented to him a more logical view of life, and he published a pamphlet on “ The Necessity of Atheism.” He was expelled from college. Now Oxford glories in his memory.

A year before he entered college he had begun a poem, “ Queen Mab.” After his expulsion he printed it for private circulation. His maturer artistic judgment only regarded a portion of it as worthy of pre-

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

servation ; but it stands as an elaborate and highly decorated first presentation of his life-thesis—freedom found in the abandonment of selfishness, and the attainment of the stability of unity.

Yet, human spirit, bravely hold thy course.  
Let virtue teach thee firmly to pursue  
The gradual paths of an aspiring change :  
For birth, and life, and death, and that strange  
state

Before the naked soul has found its home,  
All tend to perfect happiness, and urge  
The restless wheels of being on their way,  
Whose flashing spokes, instinct with infinite life,  
Bicker and burn to gain their destined goal.

Shelley's fight for freedom was no mere *subject* for poetry. It was a flaming passion that shot him up against the irking marriage laws of his time, and made him turn in disgust from the flesh-eating habits of his contemporaries, with their background of tyranny and cruelty. In due time the internal fire fused the experiences of life and the gatherings of an eager and retentive brain into material fit for the operation of the hidden Artist. At twenty-three he wrote "*Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude*," a piece of jewelled melancholy that was a forerunner of his first orderly and full presentation of his rebellion—"The Revolt of Islam."

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

In this tremendous piece of work, tremendous in energy, in intellectual brilliance, in technique, in extent, he set out his vision of the "two Powers" that hold dominion over mortal things, the Spirit of Good, symbolised as an eagle, the Spirit of Evil, symbolised as a snake, between whom an amazingly realised and recounted fight opens the poem :

Such is this conflict—when mankind doth strive  
With its oppressors in a strife of blood,  
Or when free thoughts, like lightnings are alive ;  
And in each bosom of the multitude  
Justice and Truth with Custom's hydra brood  
Wage silent war ;—when priests and kings  
dissemble,  
When round pure hearts a host of hopes assemble,  
The Snake and Eagle meet—the world's foundations tremble.

The cosmic struggle is reflected in human society, and touches the protagonist of the poem.

This vital world, this home of happy spirits,  
Was as a dungeon to my blasted kind.  
All that despair from murdered hope inherits,  
They sought, and in their helpless misery blind  
A deeper prison and heavier chain did find,  
And stronger tyrants.

The sum and substance of this wonderfully wrought-out story of the eternal struggle of Right and Wrong is the simple truth that lust—spiritual, mental or physical—is the baleful tyrant that must be faced. Shelley saw

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

this enemy in all its guises. He made no compromise ; and because of his inexorable thoroughness, his work is only now, a century after his death, being seen at its true value, and variously claimed as the first word of modern socialism, of the English food reform movement, and of the struggle for the freedom of womanhood.

It is in the latter phase that one comes nearest his key-truth. The cosmic struggle began in a vast duality. There can be no peace on earth or in heaven, Shelley says, until the fundamental unity is achieved, the “Eldest of things, divine Equality.” It must be sought for in the personal unit ; not only in the harmonious relationship of the faculties and functions of soul and body, but also in the realisation of the psychological truth that all experience is solely within the self, and that a wrong done or condoned to another is a wrong to one’s own best nature.

“ Can man be free if woman be a slave ? ” he asks. His answer in the immediately following lines is, that a single bound human being turns the whole world into slavery, since all are confederate in the binding of the one. He therefore declares, in view of the subjugation of womanhood, that

Never shall peace and human nature meet,  
Till free and equal man and woman greet  
Domestic peace.

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Artistically, however, "The Revoit of Islam" was only an apprenticeship for his supreme utterance, whose title in its two words is the sum-total of Shelley's life and work—"Prometheus Unbound," the bringer of the Divine Fire into daily life released from penalty, illumination and freedom.

That stupendous work of the imagination and the heart stands on the very pinnacle of human achievement. Every line is fired with spiritual enthusiasm, and the whole vast machinery of mythological incident and personality is cohered to the central idea of struggle out of slavery into freedom, out of the exploitation of men and women by men and women into the free comradeship of Man ; *homo*, in the classical sense of man-womanhood :

Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul,  
Whose nature is its own divine control,  
Where all things flow to all, as rivers to the sea.

To the worker in the cause of human advancement there can be no loftier ideal, no purer inspiration, no "policy" that is surer of complete and lasting success.

## JOHN STUART MILL (1806—1873)

THE articulation of Freedom may come in three ways : It may be the sharp and incoherent cry of necessity arising out of tyrannous circumstance : it may be the illuminated exclamation of the poet as he glimpses the immortal Powers that are working through mankind to a glorious fulfilment : it may be spoken in the measured tones of reason, as the end of a chain of logical thinking.

John Stuart Mill was one of the authoritative exponents of rationalist philosophy during the middle fifty years of the nineteenth century. His contribution to the development of the idea of Freedom is its clear presentation as an intellectual proposition. He knew little or nothing of the necessitous side of the matter, since he was born in comfort of circumstance and freedom of mind as the son of a well-to-do and wise father. Neither did he know anything of the joy of afflictus that comes of revelation. His life, indeed, was cast in such wise as to shut him off from the disturbance of passion or illumination ; but his disability in these respects was in some measure compensated by a more than ordinary enrichment on the purely intellectual level of his nature. At three he was put to

## JOHN STUART MILL

the study of Greek; at eight, Latin; at twelve, political economy, logic, and metaphysics. At seventeen he had already earned a reputation for disquisition; and before the age when the average youth of England has reached discretion, Mill had formed a Utilitarian Society, and evinced an interest in reform to the extent of protesting against prosecutions for blasphemy which were part of the legacy of the Napoleonic Wars to England.

As Mill began life, so he continued it. At the age of seventeen he embarked on his career as an independent individual by entering the service of the East India Company at a salary of thirty pounds per annum. In five years he was in receipt of six hundred pounds per annum: in due time he reached two thousand, and when the Company was happily extinguished in 1858, Mill retired on a pension of fifteen hundred a year at the early age of fifty-two. A year later he published his essay *On Liberty*—the crown of half a century of intense intellectual activity, save for a period of darkness at the age of twenty which the poetry of Wordsworth and Shelley lightened.

He had already contributed to philosophical thought two essays that were destined to obtain classical honours, *A System of Logic*, and *Principles of Political Economy*; but it was in *On Liberty* that the fulness of his nature found expression. This was due in a large

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

measure to a circumstance that came directly out of life, not out of thought, a circumstance that had no place among the percepts and concepts of psychological terminology, but nevertheless exerted a powerful influence in setting bounds and direction to his thinking—the friendship of a good woman who united a clear and furnished brain to a sympathetic heart. For twenty years, during the life of her husband, Mrs. Taylor was the guide and inspirer of the philosopher. After the death of her husband she married Mill, who was then forty-five. Seven years later she died, and the monument to her memory is Mill's dedication of what was practically their joint work, *On Liberty*. She herself had been the main author of an essay *The Enfranchisement of Women*, which Mill, some years after her death, developed into the feminist scripture, *The Subjection of Women*.

It is to *On Liberty*, however, that we turn for Mill's contribution of thought on the subject of Freedom in general. He sees the struggle between the spirit of Freedom and the spirit of Authority as the principal feature of human history in its preliminary stages. He does not mean authority in the authoritative sense, since freedom has its own authority. He means authority in its arbitrary sense at the command of a tyrant, be that tyrant an individual or a group of individuals. The aim of the struggle was to put

## JOHN STUART MILL

bounds to the power which the ruling man or men should be allowed to exercise over the community.

Freedom, therefore, in its early stages was simply the putting of a protective zone between the realm of the ruled and the ruler. In process of time their interests became theoretically identical, and a new, and to Mill not less objectionable, "authority" was evolved, "the tyranny of the majority" in matters that he conceived to be the sole concern of the individual. "There is," he maintains, "a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence : and to find that limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs as protection against political despotism."

What, then, is the appropriate region of human freedom, in Mill's idea ?

It comprises, first, the domain of consciousness : demanding liberty of conscience, in the most comprehensive sense ; liberty of thought and feeling ; absolute freedom of opinion and sentiment on all subjects...from this liberty of each individual follows the liberty, within the same limits, of combination amongst individuals ; freedom to unite for any purpose not involving harm to others....

The last five words of the foregoing form the debatable line of demarcation between perfect individual

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

freedom, and the limits imposed upon it by society. Mill works it out in some detail, and unfortunately in his choice of examples provides a concurrent example of how a rigid adherence to a thesis may falsify itself. He is entirely against the movement for the prohibition of the liquor traffic in Britain. The drinking of fermented liquors is, he declares, an individual matter, not a social one. The fact is, of course, that drinking is one of the most anti-social of practices, that cannot restrict itself to individual action.

We need not, however, make too much of this lapse. He was against all restriction. He would leave the individual free to think, say, and do as he or she pleased—and free to take the consequences. It is the better of two alternatives, the other being “the establishment of the right of every individual to claim that the other individuals must act as he thinks they ought.” It is, indeed, more than probable that the particular acts that are unsocial are in essence but protests against arbitrary inhibition, and that the lifting of the embargo would have as a consequence their disappearance, since there is no fun in sinning if there is nothing to sin against.

Mill was at India House, and in the service of the old East India Company, while he was writing *On Liberty*, and one is constantly driven to wonder if he ever paused to consider the application of his thought

### JOHN STUART MILL

to the dealings of his employers with the people of India ; and, if he did, what infraction of his own liberty prevented his giving utterance to the logical fulfilment of his own thought. If it is a law that

human beings owe to each other the help to distinguish the better from the worse, and encouragement to choose the former and avoid the latter ..but neither one person nor any number of persons is warranted in saying to another human creature of ripe years that he shall not do with his life for his own benefit what he chooses to do with it...

it is surely as applicable to east as west, and as valid between groups within the great unity of the human race as between individuals and groups within the unity of a particular nation. Even if Mill, however, exhibited the characteristic defect of the "rationalist" type of mind—the lack of a sensitive and wide imagination—it remains for Freedom's exponents to-day to carry his principles beyond the borders of England and Europe, and apply them in the tropical zone as well as the temperate.

## WALT WHITMAN (1819-1892)

WILLIAM BLAKE declared that “poetry fettered fetters the human race.” Only a poet, and a mystic poet, could have knit up as with a thread of lightning the apparently remote relationship of a free art and a free people. Ninety-nine persons in a hundred would hold that people produce art, free or fettered ; but that is a view of things that forgets that the limbs of the body corporate are suspended from the brain, and that, despite the urge to material acquisition, the heart of humanity tramps bravely after a few phrases that once went singing through some poet’s brain. We shall make a mistake, all the same, if we regard the effect of poetry on life as instant. The converse of Blake’s saying is true : poetry freed frees the human race, but the free poetry and the free race are not contemporaneous. That is why Whitman, the first wholly freed poet, I think, in the history of literature in the English language, regarded himself as a foundation-stone, not as a ridge-tile.

We may pass over the disputed question as to whether Whitman was a poet or not in the accepted artistic sense. His family circle regarded his first book and Longfellow’s “Hiawatha”—then just publish-

## WALT WHITMAN

ed, 1855—as “pretty much the same muddle as the other.” His mother’s verdict was that if “*Hiawatha*” was poetry, perhaps Walt’s was poetry too. And there we may leave it. Whitman himself had no doubts on the subject. He had, as a young man with good intentions towards his fellows, used the vehicles of prose and verse in journalism, but his method was as regular as Lowell’s, and less distinctive. Whitman as *Whitman* did not appear until he penned the declaration :

Come, I will make this continent indissoluble,  
and added to it the autobiographical item,

I, now thirty-six years old, in perfect health begin,  
Hoping to cease not till death.

Behind this clarion announcement of a new power in literature there is a picture of a big fellow—“the laziest who ever undertook to edit a city paper”—soaking himself in the experiences of life and the influences of nature ; fighting against the quadruple alliance of capital punishment, slavery, duelling, and the war spirit ; throwing away his frock coat and high hat, and working into his mental fibre slowly and deliberately those principles of freedom that pushed him beyond the bounds of established expression and opened an era in literature.

His earliest formulation was as a democrat. He wrote :

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

A democratic writer, I take it, is one, the tendency of whose pages is to destroy those old landmarks which pride and fashion have set up to make impassable distinctions between brothers of the great family.

But the orthodox democratic party was not sufficiently elastic to accommodate his developing genius, and he became one of the party of "free soil, free speech, free labour, free man."

At thirty-six he took to carpentry as a means of livelihood : at the same time he conceived the idea of writing a book that would be an embodiment of both himself and America. He had been forgotten as a journalist during a period of silent absorption. The air of the time was vibrating with transcendentalism, communism, socialism, abolitionism, perfectionism ; but Whitman was patiently disentangling himself from all credal limitations, and finding the fulfilment of the command, "Know Thyself," to be the entrance to the life of freedom.

While Whitman had immersed himself in the current abstractions of his journalistic days—albeit with a detachment and a humour that enabled him to ascribe an electoral defeat to the fact that the party "didn't get enough votes by a long shot"—he remained parochial, undistinguished, un-American : when he found Himself he found also America, became its spiritual Columbus, and in the assertion of his own

## WALT WHITMAN

freedom was made a free man of the City that hath foundation in the heart and imagination of all mankind. His gift to the cause of Freedom was Himself : his contribution to thought on Freedom was his life. Before the first publication of his poems he had written his conviction of the relationship of the Artist to Freedom :

As there can be no true Artist without a glowing thought of Freedom, so Freedom pays the Artist back many fold, and under her umbrage Art must sooner or later tower to its loftiest and most perfect proportions.

He was not thinking of any remote patronage of Freedom by Artists such as he then conceived himself to be numbered amongst : words had to be confirmed in work :

A poet must be a champion of freedom.

Yet it took him forty-two years of life to make up his mind to certain re-adjustments of daily habit ; and it is quite characteristic of his centralisation of the universe in the personal that his so doing has no hint of sectionalised humanitarianism. In his diary he wrote :

I have this day, this hour, resolved to inaugurate for myself, a pure, perfect, sweet, clean-blooded, robust body, by ignoring all drinks but water and pure milk, and all fat meats, late suppers—a great body, a purged, cleansed, spiritualised, invigorated body.

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

Thus equipped he moved onwards with his mission of bearing the New World on his shoulders—a task made possible only because, instead of feeling America as outside himself, and therefore a weight and a chain, he conceived of himself as co-extensive with America and so drew his immense inspiration from sources of inexhaustible variety.

It is necessary to remember this merging of himself with his country in order to get the proper view of the personality that is the outstanding feature of his work. He sang of himself, but he made it clear that he sang also of all the other selves. To him all things were rooted in One, and that one included nature as well as humanity. Humanity found its fullest freedom in squaring itself with the vast intuitive life of nature :

No politics, art, religion, behaviour, or what not, is of account, unless it compare with the amplitude of the earth,

Unless it face the exactness, vitality, impartiality, rectitude, of the earth.

Such was the circumference of his creed. Its motive power must be Affection.

Affection shall solve the problems of Freedom yet;  
Those who love each other shall become invincible.  
The dependence of Liberty shall be lovers,  
The continuity of Equality shall be comrades.

WALT WHITMAN

The " personality " of Whitman therefore resolves itself into the paradox of the fullest *democracy* hitherto expressed in western poetical literature. He works it into detail thus :

Where the slave ceases, and the master of slaves ceases...

Where outside authority enters always after the precedence of inside authority ;

Where the citizen is always the head and ideal—and President, Mayor, Governor, and what not, are agents for pay ;

Where children are taught to be laws to themselves, and to depend on themselves ;...

Where equanimity is illustrated in affairs ;

Where speculations on the Soul are encouraged ;

Where women walk in public processions in the streets, the same as the men ;

Where they enter the public assembly and take places the same as the men ;.....

There the great city stands.

The two lines before the last show that Whitman had passed the final and most searching test of the would-be champion of Freedom—the attitude to womanhood. All through his works there is an insistence on perfect equality—or, rather, of the breaking down of all inhibition, so that men and women will be set free to find their fullest natural and temperamental expression. This was his complete connotation of the word *people* which, on the lips of

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

party politicians was until recently perpetually of the male gender. He knew that the *people* had not yet arisen, but he saw through the years with the gift of prophecy :

Years of the unperformed ! Your horizon rises—I  
see it part a way for more august dramas:  
I see not America only—I see not only Liberty's  
nation but other nations embattling ;...  
I see Freedom completely armed, and victorious,  
and very haughty, with Law by her side, both  
issuing forth against the idea of caste ;...  
I see the frontiers and boundaries of the old  
aristocracies broken ;  
I see the landmarks of European Kings removed ;  
I see this day the People beginning their land-  
marks, all others give way...

His theory of Freedom may be paraphrased in the terms of another great statement :

This most of all, in thine own self be free,  
And it must follow as the night the day,  
Thou can't not then put bonds on any man—  
or on any woman either—as Whitman would add.

## HENRY BRYAN BINNS (1873—

It is an axiom of literary criticism that the significance of a poet's work cannot be correctly appreciated until it has been removed by the process of time a considerable distance away from contemporary thought and feeling : that is, until the poet is quite dead. The axiom is very likely true in the case of the bulk of poetry, particularly English poetry, which deals mainly with the surfaces of things, and only in lucky moments has any inkling as to the true constitution of the Divine Pilgrim, the Human Soul. In its case time may be necessary for the sifting of the grain from the chaff, though it is fairly certain that much of time's decision will also be overruled in the future, when the full realisation of human nature, in the wider sense that is known to some, shall have altered the values of things literary.

It is because I believe that the raising of the standard of literary values will find the poetry of Henry Bryan Binns among the abiding things of the future, that I am anticipating the verdict of time, and setting his work, in respect of its expression of the urge to Freedom, alongside that of the acknowledged masters.

Indeed, so far as my knowledge of him is concerned, he might as well be buried a millenium. I only

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

know from a note in an English weekly paper that Mr. Binns was born in 1873, but that figure may, for all I know, be a symbol, for there is in his work a courtesy and tenderness that have been left behind by the modern English poets (if he *is* an English poet), and there is in his work a vision, a knowledge, and an inclusiveness that belong to an era of song that is not yet fully with us.

In Mr. Binns' poetry one gets a feeling that his aspiration for Freedom, and his wise understanding of even the most extreme expressions of the women's struggle in Great Britain and Ireland, are less an intellectual proposition than a spiritual necessity. From scattered phrases we gather that the poet has faced the tyrant in his own nature. He has known the humiliation of being "a spirit commanded of its flesh." But out of his struggle he has learned the way to Freedom, not the freedom that shirks life, but that puts it in leash to the Will.

We that build Freedom's body cell by cell,  
To outlive these our own when they are gone.  
Into the dust, choose that to labour on  
Which is most stubborn and intractable :—  
Our elemental passions that rebel  
Against all governance,—these one by one  
We build into that living Parthenon  
Wherein the spirit of Liberty shall dwell.

HENRY BRYAN BINNS

That is the only sure place of Freedom.

They only unto Freedom have attained  
In whom it is become more than a cry  
Wherewith the aspiring heart may prophesy  
Things seen afar : who have the franchise gained  
Of the dumb body that held the soul enthralled  
To hungers that it might not satisfy.

The last two lines give, I believe, a clue to Mr. Binns' thought with regard to his own complex nature, and its relationship to the universe. When he says *soul*, he means the conscious individual, and he distinguishes between its life and the life of the senses. He has no quarrel with the senses as such, but he observes their tendency to enchain or weaken the will that is the instrument of the soul, and he has come to the ancient truth that Freedom is only attainable in the assertion of the soul's supremacy over the body. "We have learned"

From passion drawn asunder how to flood  
High Heaven with Earth's own arc-light, Liberty.

But the arc-light is simply the human reflection of the Spiritual Sun : it is "the word of God that man must say." All struggle, in short, towards Freedom, is but a readjustment of earthly things for a fuller expression of the Divine. Shelley sings of the "one Spirit's plastic stress." Mr. Binns puts it in more modern phraseology in a sonnet entitled " Franchise for God."

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

Ye that refuse expression to the power  
And passion in our souls, against you set  
The spirit of life itself.....'tis God ye flout  
Chaining this manhood to your silly tasks :  
Through all your secular debate about  
His solemn service, ye have been afraid  
To give Him franchise, it is all He asks.

That was the touchstone by which Mr. Binns tested the woman suffrage agitation ; and it is not surprising that he found its true perspective, and had the honesty to cut down to the root paradox, that only in the attainment of Freedom by womanhood will manhood attain Freedom from itself.

Theirs is the need for franchise whom a blind  
Horror of lust imprisons in the tomb  
Of their own bodies, fearful lest the bloom  
Of innocence should tempt it, or the kind  
Welcome of beauty.

There he touched the primal tyranny, from which escape is only possible (and he is speaking of the masses of mankind in the West, not of the little minority of freed souls) by womanhood achieving power.

To awaken, not the dull possessive heat  
Of passion, but its liberating fire  
That looses glory bedded in the clod :  
To free in man the sex-imprisoned God,  
Who only can be freed by your desire  
For a Freedom that shall make your own complete.

## HENRY BRYAN BINNS

Through this mutual freedom he sees the only way  
to shift

This ever-heavier legacy of wrong  
Bequeathed by generations of the strong  
Oppressors....

And he cries out :

Now every hour is crying aloud the need  
For men awakened from their doubt to know  
Themselves the bugles that to judgment blow :  
For women whose interpid spirits breed  
The passionate faith that is the only seed  
Of promise, now the world begins to go  
Mad, with the heady ferment of its woe  
Flown to its brain.....

The War may have been the cause of his cry, or it  
may have been its devastating answer. In either case,  
Mr. Binns would be less concerned with the "fruits  
of action" than with action itself, for

There is not any act avails so much  
As this invisible wedding of the will  
With Life, yea though it seem to accomplish nought.

The results of action are in good hands. The main  
thing is that one does one's share ; not the dharma  
of another but one's own dharma. He expresses this  
first principle of Freedom, that is, Freedom to make  
one's own mistakes, and not merely to exist second-  
hand on the virtues of another, in a little poem,  
"Thwarted," from which I quote these verses :

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

I grudge against the people who  
Loved me, and would not let me do  
The eager mischief that I would,  
Because, they said, it was not good.

\* \* \* \* \*

And all my spirit was encased  
In ignorance : I could not taste  
The fruit that should have ripened on  
The thwarted deed I had not done.  
Desire grew sullen that was hot :  
Still though I longed, I did it not :  
Until at last I grew into  
The mischief that I did not do.

In these lines the poet, though speaking of a child's experience, is not far from the central evil of all extraneous tyranny. He is not ignorant of the conventional fear of the danger of such a doctrine ; but he knows that the utmost extent of that hypothetical danger is a pin point compared with the gigantic wrong that is done to the growing soul of humanity through the lack of insight and confidence in the indwelling Divinity that oppression shows in standing between an individual or a race and its own experience :

Only faith's doubt-dispelling eyes discern  
Life's secret virtue : only they are sure  
Of the spirit hidden in this dim obscure  
Humanity. Amid the dark they burn

HENRY BRYAN BINNS

Flame-clear, and ever to their brightness turn  
The hungry eyes of the nations, that endure  
The substitutes of statecraft for that pure  
Diet of Freedom after which they yearn.

After which we may well pray that poets may take  
to politics.

## IRISH BARDS AND BALLAD MAKERS.

The promulgation of the English laws in Ireland in the seventeenth century by a Stuart monarch from whom much had been hoped by the Irish people because of their religious affinities, brought to an official, though not to this day a complete, end the legal codes of the Brehons, or law makers, that had been the polity of the realm for thirteen centuries from its approval by saint Patrick, and for untold centuries before. That system had included the poet on a level with the king : it had been evolved largely through the Bardic Order, and in its beginnings it had been preserved in verse.

Under the new regime the poet was dethroned by law, not merely because of his ancient legal office, but because of his contemporary patriotic influence. But a law, in order to be effective, must either be an expression of the consciousness of the race whos obedience it demands, or, if imposed from without, must have an essential adjustment to the nature, or circumstances, or both, of the subjects. The new laws in seventeenth-century Ireland had neither qualification, so far as the poets were concerned. Officially the poets had ceased to exist. Actually they

## IRISH BARDS AND BALLAD MAKERS

struck their roots more deeply than ever into the life of the country. The classicism of the Bardic Schools became a matter of history, but the means to expression that were found in the advance of education, brought poets to birth in every townland. Poetry was a spiritual necessity of the race, and spiritual necessity will out, in spite of hanging and banishment.

The first rigours of the attempt to stamp out the National idea in Ireland were followed by an outburst of love poetry ; but the poetry had a strange smack of impersonality. It was ardent in the highest degree. It breathed immense devotion. Yet, as time went on, a wide-aware observer must have suffered some bewilderment at a growing sense of restriction and redundancy in the literary expression of a people whose poetry heretofore had been characterised by elaborateness in thought and subject as well as in technique. Was it a sign of decay that so many poets sang of walking out and meeting a maiden who won their devotion ; or, by way of variety, saw the maiden in a vision ? Indeed, was there not something scandalously inconsistent with their breathings of almost unearthly affection, in the fact that a lady called Maureen Ni Cullinan had received the simultaneous devotion of half a dozen different poets ? Was she the kind of person to win and hold the love of a respectable citizen ?

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

The fact has to be frankly admitted that Mauree Ni Cullinan *did* receive this devotion. It must also be owned that the devotion of the poets was proof positive that they were *not* respectable citizens : they were outlaws, made so by the very act of devotion; for Maureen Ni Cullinan, and Sheila Ni Gara, and Kathleen Ni Houlihan, were *names for Ireland*. It was a crime by the law of the invader for anyone, poet or otherwise, to sing their love of their land. It was worse than a crime in the hearts of the poets *not* to sing of her. The sequel is a vibrant example of a quick-witted people fulfilling the first law of nature, self-preservation, in both the outer and inner life, by a single operation. The poets adapted themselves to the circumstances in which they found themselves, and at the same time passed on a heritage of patriotic poetry in symbolic form that is to-day the inspiration of lovers of Freedom everywhere.

When the necessity for dissimulation passed away, the method, rendered sacred by the memory of suffering and devotion, remained a precious tradition, and persisted into and through the eighteenth century, side by side with the frank Jacobite songs that were struck from the Irish harp.

The eighteenth century, removed a sufficient distance in time and emotion from the keen disappointment that followed the high hopes evoked by the new

## IRISH BARDS AND BALLAD-MAKERS

dynasty, found Ireland and her poets on the side of the Stuarts. Kathleen Ni Houlihan and King Shamus (James II) ran each other close for first place in the honours of song. A curious and illuminating difference is, however, noticeable. The songs to Ireland, under any of her symbolical names, are expressive of pure love of country : the songs in honour of James are divided between a patriotic hope and a religious enthusiasm. The division between Catholic and Protestant that had come a century before out of the long struggle against the foreigner, at his instigation and subject to his set plan of "divide and conquer," was now not secondary but primary. Politically speaking, there was hardly a hair's difference for or against the two kings, William III of Orange and James II of England, who fought an English battle on Irish soil for a crown that covered Ireland and had no intention of uncovering it. The Irish people had fared little worse under Elizabeth than under Mary, and no better under the Stuarts. But James II was a Catholic king at war with a Protestant Dutchman. That fact was enough. The sword of Ireland was put into the ineffective hands of James when he fled from England to Ireland. The hope of Ireland went with him when he fled defeated from Ireland to France ; and the poets sang of a coming day, when

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

From tyrannous men our temples then all free  
shall rise,  
And the Pope of God will bless our sod, and still  
our sighs ;  
And right and might rule day and night in Erin's  
isle ;  
And we shall sing to our exiled King glad hymns  
the while.

The favour in which the Stuarts were held has its counterpart in the poetry of the period, not so much in denunciation of William of Orange as in a particularised criticism of the English "planters," who were settled on the land in dispossession of the "rebel" Irish. The language of the settlers seems to have given much offence to the fine ears that had been reared on the Bardic subtleties of interlinear as well as terminal rhymes, and on alliteration and assonance. A Munster poet, who was also by way of occupation a publican, satirises "the churls of the dismal tongue," and again refers to the settlers as "the sullen tribe of the dreary tongue." While some proportion of the uncomplimentary opinion may be assigned to the hostile situation of critic and criticised, that situation cannot be regarded as the sole basis of the opinion of either the speech or the speaker. The poet and his fellows were good judges of language. The tongue of Virgil and his works were familiar not only to the poets, but to the peasantry, through the educational

## IRISH BARDS AND BALLAD MAKERS

and classical enthusiasm of the "hedge-school-masters" who had arisen when education was officially denied to the Irish, as "Sheila Ni Gara" had arisen when "Ireland" was banned in song. English was so widely spoken that one poet, Timothy O'Sullivan, was nick-named "The Gaelic" because he knew no English. He had begun his career as a singer of amatory song in his native tongue, and ended his life as the author of *A Pious Miscellany*—a poetical atonement!

It is possible, however, that the poor opinion of the English speech was based on something more than technical considerations. The speakers of the English speech were as much to blame as the speech itself. They came as adventurers in search of material welfare. They settled amongst a people who felt the call of "the Star of Knowledge," as a Connacht poet has it. They had left their own culture, such as it was, behind them : and the insecurity of a tenure based on force gave them little encouragement to partake of the culture of their neighbours, if they had a mind to. To the Irish, with their genius for hospitality, even at the expense of principle, the Williamites appeared as ? "sullen tribe." To the scholars and poets they presented a low type of intelligence; "dunces" they were called by Andrew MacGrath, "the merry pedlar," a confirmed drunkard, and a

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

classical scholar ; but perhaps the most bitter taunt levelled at them from the Irish point of view was in the line “ They have no soul except for gain.” That criticism comes right out of the heart of the race, and lights up the whole of Irish history : it links up the eighteenth century poet of the people with the sixth century Prince Cellach, who, on being prevailed upon for public reasons to resign his student life at the monastic school of Clonmacnoise in order to take the crown, lamented thus :

Woe to him who leaveth lore  
For the red world's art or ore.

To others be the “ gaining of the whole world”; to Katheen Ni Houlihan the keeping of her own soul. Let the Williamites turn the soil for gold. Much good may it do them. The wild-flower bordered little road with the golden sunset at the end of it will suffice the poet for song ; and the poetry of the period, like that of all preceding periods, is rich in natural allusions that indicate the deepest intimacy with the life of earth and water and sky.

The bards and ballad makers are still singing in Ireland; and it looks as if once again their song would have to put on the mask of love for a mysterious woman. The following sentences are taken from a letter by Mr. T. M. Healy, one of the oldest and best-known members of the Irish Parliamentary Party, in October 1918, and published in the public press.

## IRISH BARDS AND BALLAD MAKERS

Moved by the sentence of two years' hard labour inflicted by a court-martial on a poor actor who, in some hamlet, sang two Irish songs (long previously sung and published without objection), I wrote to a recent amnesty meeting pointing out that an effective protest against victimisation of that kind would be the election of such convicts to Parliament. I offered to make my seat available for such a choice...Having served thirty-eight years in Parliament, I should perhaps make it clear that my resignation is not due to weariness, or sloth, or even doubt.

On November 28, 1918, when the "poor actor" had served two months out of his two years' imprisonment for singing two Irish songs (one song—one year), Robert Bridges, in celebration of the ending of the Great War, sang:

The good God bless this day,  
And we for ever and aye  
Keep our love living,  
Till all men 'neath heaven's dome  
Sing Freedom's Harvest-home  
In one Thanksgiving !

To which every lover of Freedom will say "Amen" and yet wonder whether the poet laureate to the government that puts an actor in gaol for singing songs of his native land, has felt the pressure of the true Footsteps of Freedom; or whether the Freedom of which he sings is capable of the paraphrase—"I grant you perfect Freedom to do what I allow you to do."

But the Footsteps of Freedom move on.



## MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS



## THE LIMITS OF BROTHERHOOD

The following sonnet by G. Egremont is from the London Labour Newspaper, *The Herald* :

Let us be men, my brothers; men are more  
Than nations. Brotherhood's once-loosened tide  
Shall sweep away all barriers that divide  
Mankind; "they may be one"—can we not soar  
To this? Through stygian darkness of the hoar  
Past centuries, touch of each was lost; in wide  
Emergence into Dawn, shake hands! beside  
The pale no longer cur-like snarl ; the door  
Of Love lies open ; enter : rase for aye  
The savage's blood-pricked confines; patriots then  
Of one vast realm where brother lights the way  
For brother, with no crown on earth again  
But His the Omnipotent King of Glory, say,  
Shall this be so? not nations; no ! but Men.

The question that naturally comes to one's lips is : "Would not a few women be useful?" The question exposes the one-sidedness of the thought of the sonnet. Very probably the writer of it is a suffragist who has not yet found a way out of the limitations of a language that has been brought up only by its father. In this respect speech may be a trouble to an expanding consciousness, but thought will ultimately mould speech to its needs. To the sonneteer, this linguistic

### FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

masculinity may mean little or nothing : but words have a curious way of influencing one's attitude when one is not looking ; and as the majority of mankind do not often take the trouble to look or listen, in the deeper sense of these operations, it is incumbent on those who possess the dangerous responsibility of utterance, to be constantly on the watch against verbal fog and mud. It is bad enough to use speech for the transmission of false thought, but a falsity that is alive will carry a challenge with it, and stimulate contradiction; it is something less than worthy of intelligent beings to put their necks into the noose of a word or a phrase, and allow their heads and all that they contain to be dragged through narrow ways of expression that must ultimately lead to narrow ways of thought and action unless the temptation of acquiescence is broken.

The author of the foregoing sonnet is probably in the latter danger as regards his idea of Brotherhood. The word itself shares the disability of a one-sexed language; but for the present it may pass as a term for comradeship. His danger lies in giving *too wide* an interpretation to its operation. "Brotherhood's once loosened tide," he says, " shall sweep away all barriers that divide mankind". He asks: "Can we not soar to this?" If we did, we should not be human beings, but birds. That is just the point. The first concern of brotherhood is with men and women in the contacts

### THE LIMITS OF BROTHERHOOD

of daily life on the surface of the earth. Brotherhood in a room of a society, or in the deeper region of spiritual affinity, is a quite easy matter, and may become a sentimentality. Brotherhood in practice is another thing. It comes up against a *chevaux de frise* of individual wills and temperaments.

What are we going to do with these personal distinctions? There is a type of "brotherhood" that regards differences of habits and language as "barriers." Such a type of brotherhood has something of the outlook of the merchant who wanted to break down barriers between nations, and strongly insisted that all stupid foreigners should be *made* to learn English.

The term *barrier* needs watching. The ordinary use of the term applies to something erected to keep people from a proscribed area; but the things that are referred to as barriers between nations are mainly those distinctive features that each nation has evolved, not to close itself in, but to let itself out by way of expression. To ask a nation to pull down these "barriers" is like asking the members of a family to slough their skins so that the barriers of feature and complexion may not stand in the way of their anatomical unity.

True Brotherhood sees the essential unity in the spiritual nature, but it recognises the essential diversity of the physical and mental nature, and would give

## **FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM**

these free scope without extraneous dictation, in the religions, arts and social organisation of natural groupings of human beings; because it sees that only through the full development of individual characteristics can the essential condition of ultimate comradeship be found—and that condition is freedom, freedom that ignores barriers; that does not break them down, and so accentuate them, but walks through them, and so makes them co-operative means to the great end.

## NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

Some time ago, in a lecture at University College, London, Professor J. H. Morgan saw in the modern creation of Dominion armies a factor which would exercise a profound influence on the destinies of the British Empire. Great as the claims of the various units were before the War, they would be, he considered, infinitely greater after it. Britain had risen to being a great Asiatic power in its control of India. It was under treaty obligations to another Asiatic power, Japan. How, he asks, can Britain reconcile her relationships with these powers and the anti-Asiatic policy of the Dominions ?

The anomaly cannot be reconciled, and Prof. Morgan makes no attempt to do so. He performs the better work of considering how the Imperial units may be so unified that such areas of guilt may disappear from the Imperial conscience. He has little faith in an Imperial Federal Parliament, as no numerical basis of representation could be found that would adequately represent the claims of the Imperial Government in such a Parliament.

This want of faith is, however, due to the arithmetic of a speculative calculation being coloured white. It

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

does not appear to have come home to Prof. Morgan fully that there is no colour bar in principles, and that the motto of "Taxation without representation is tyranny" does not stop with £. s. d., but works equally in rupees, annas and pies.

Prof. Morgan decides, therefore, against a Federal Parliament. He holds that the Imperial polity must be found in a development of the executive side, rather than of the legislative side, and he suggests a Federal Executive Council.

But the important discovery of Prof. Morgan—important to him, though a commonplace with political thinkers for a quarter of a century—is that Internationalism of the kind dreamt of by politicians is gone, and in its stead the spirit of Nationality has begun to incarnate with new power and meaning.

This is quite true. Its reason is that the Internationalism dreamt of was not real Internationalism in any sense, but a projected commercial buckling up of big political trusts, each of which could not fully trust its confederate, since all had equally bad consciences as regards their domestic affairs both in relation to their own "free-born" industrial slaves, and their treatment of certain "rebel" or "subject" areas. The Internationalism that will be worthy of contemplation will be found in a spiritual comradeship, a free give-and-take in the things that matter, not in questions of barter

## NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

and buying and selling. The near attainment of the ideal may have been shattered by the proposed exclusion of the Teutonic peoples from the circle of the civilised nations. But that phase will pass, and the ideal of Internationalism will re-emerge with, it is to be hoped, some apprehension of the truth that the great essential step to it is the complete attainment of free Nationality. Prof. Morgan regards the latter as an alternative to Internationalism : in truth Nationality is father and mother of true Internationalism.

The spurious Internationalism of trade and commerce can be no more than an unstable confederacy of jealousy and selfishness ; but the development of the National ideal, on a basis of freedom in co-operation, such as, we earnestly trust the proposed League of Nations will take in hand, would reduce the piratical element in human affairs to a minimum, or totally eliminate it, and enable the nations to unite their forces in that open and honest atmosphere of unselfishness in which alone can be found stability and continuity and an open road to the attainment of true and complete human comradeship.

## IMPERIAL RECONSTRUCTION

To those to whom the activities of humanity appear, not as unrelated happenings with as little connection as the Jews and Samaritans of old, but as superficially diverse though essentially connected parts of a vast plan whose impulse is from the inner realm of things, certain utterances by two great English publicists on the subject of Imperial affairs after the War must have been read with special consolation. Lord Rosebery and Lord Milner, two men in the front rank of British statesmanship, have made pronouncements which give one the hope of a post-war reconstruction that will go far towards making peace permanent.

In a speech as Chancellor of London University, Lord Rosebery, once Prime Minister of England, reverted to the Imperial Federation League, founded some forty years ago, and gave voice to the following striking sentence : "Our constitution is, after all, in the technical sense, a mere ruin. There are so many breaches in the walls that there is ample opportunity for rebuilding when we can find the architect." His vision, however, was not limited to the British Constitution as it emerged and diverged from the Charter of Runnymede. After the War, there will appear, in

## IMPERIAL RECONSTRUCTION

Lord Rosebery's opinion, nothing less than the "gigantic task of re-organising the British Empire". As a preliminary step and as a salutary purgation of a national bad conscience, Lord Rosebery, speaking for England, admitted, "We have not hitherto been very elastic in our constitutional dealings," and stated, we shall have to clean a good deal off the slate before "We begin to write the new organisation of the Empire upon it" Lord Rosebery further remarked that, contrary to his opinion of former years, he now believed that the proposals for the formulation of a constitutional plan for the Empire should come from England.

Lord Milner, ex-British Consul in South Africa, in the chair at a lecture on the educating of the masses in the responsibilities of Empire, had, like Lord Rosebery, to own to a change of view. He had formerly thought of the "organic union of the British Empire" as a matter of slow growth, but the War had brought about "a heat of feeling in which it was possible to fuse metals in a short time which, in ordinary circumstances, might take years to weld." "I believe," he said "that very shortly after the end of the War, we shall find ourselves face to face with the main problem of Imperial organisation, not as an academic question, but as an immediate practical question," and he added "it will be forced upon us from the Dominions even if

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

it is not universally raised here." As a preparation for whatever may be the event, Lord Milner is keen on the education of the English democracy.

These two utterances, made practically simultaneously, and presumably without collusion, are a remarkable testimony to the impacts which are being made on the western political epidermis by the spirit of evolution. Both see that the British Constitution is, to all intents and purposes, "closed for alterations and repairs ;" and that a revision of the relationships between the various constituents of the British Empire and its centre is absolutely necessary.

So far so good ; but it must be confessed that there is not much further cause for enthusiasm in the speeches under notice. From the point of view of India's urgent need for a drastic and sympathetic handling of her vast problems, one can detect in these pronouncements the "red herring" method, that is, the drawing of a minor and false scent across the main trail. One can have no objection to England's joining Lord Rosebery in a day of National repentance; but we have a chilly fear that if they sit down amongst their sins to a slate-wiping process, it may prove so protracted that the repentance may become the greatest sin of all. We can quite understand the *litterateur* in Lord Rosebery harking back with a sense of gratification to his much spoken phrase of 'a clean slate'; but we cannot allow the

## IMPERIAL RECONSTRUCTION

fallacy of a figure of speech to militate against the speedy fulfilment of national and international right. Life is not a slate ; progress is not a simple matter of a sponge and a piece of chalk : it is more in the nature of a palimpsest with layer upon layer of records. True repentance is not exhibited in wandering through a museum of past sins, but in immediately setting about the performance of virtuous action.

Lord Milner's "red-herring,"—the education of the British masses as a preliminary to dealing with the physical, mental and spiritual needs of lands and peoples with whom they have no more vital contact than newspapers and missionary anniversaries—is a more plausible fish and more false than Lord Rosebery's. Its plausibility is based on the now generally accepted theory that education is the sure bearer of light and freedom. Its falsity is in the assumption that political education precedes political action. The reverse, as every observer of human activity knows, is the case. The Parliament Act, that strangled the House of Lords, did not come as a climax to an educational campaign : it came as a necessity to the Liberal Party; and when they had determined to break the power of the Lords, *then* they called for the approval of their supporters. How much education preceded the Act that transferred a quarter of a million sterling per annum from the pockets of the British rate-payers to

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

those of the members of the House of Commons ? We remember that the demand for woman suffrage was met by the cry, " Educate the women first ; then it will be time to consider their demand ;" but there was no talk of education when an Adult Suffrage Bill was fired at the House of Commons, without a whisper of demand in the country, simply to serve party purposes. The Irish Home Rule Bill was not the fine flower of education of the English masses. It was not found in the first Liberal Parliament, in which the Irish vote could be ignored. It made a sudden appearance in the succeeding Parliament when the Irish had secured " the balance of power " through the not very heroic fact that Liberals and Conservatives in the House of Commons came nearly equal in numbers. It is postponed *sine die* by Mr. Lloyd George in the new Coalition Parliament because it has ceased to be a political shuttle-cock and is now a tragedy.

We have no objection to the English masses being given a much needed education on the subject of, say, India ; but while the football enthusiasts of Lancashire are being made wise on a subject in which they have not a jot of interest, the immense millions of this country are groaning under well-nigh intolerable burdens of poverty and ignorance that can only be lightened by the prompt and direct action of responsible representatives who, by lineage and environment

## IMPERIAL RECONSTRUCTION

are capable of getting at the roots of India's wrongs.

Lord Milner is quite right : the problem of Imperial organisation will be forced upon them from the Dominions : in the case of India, if it does not come through the rapid growth of political thought, and a sense of the responsibility of contributing, to the utmost extent of free National institutions, to the world's good, it will come by way of tragic economic necessity. It is the pity of pities that British statesmanship has never been able to see beyond the end of the party nose, until a world catastrophe compelled it through sheer fright to undertake the beginnings of common-sense National organisation. We trust the measure of wisdom that has come out of calamity will be extended to the prompt carrying out of measures to realise Lord Milner's ideal of "Empire," "not domination, force, or militarism, but the permanent organic union of a number of free States to maintain the great human ideals that are common to them."

## THE POLICY OF THE OPEN DOOR

It is a curious feature of human relationships that, as they take wider and wider sweeps, and embrace within their sphere larger and larger congeries of human beings and human interests, they adopt certain methods of action, which they term policies, and call them by figures of speech.

Thus, when the industrial nations of Europe began to find that the continual manufacture of articles (not for use as the demand arose, but for sale as an appetite for them was artificially developed) began to overtake and ultimately to out-distance the use for them, the more enterprising spirits among the commercial classes began to study Geography, and to "think Imperially" as the late Joseph Chamberlain put it. Then they lit upon the blessed phrase, "the open door". It sounded expansive, go-aheadish, airy : it spelt adventure, civilisation and—profits. *The policy of the open door* became a European mantram.

An excellent policy : the very sum-total of pure democratic thought ! But all policies, like all doors, bear the limitations of their heredity and environment. The doors in Japan, China, India, Timbuktoo and elsewhere, which were visualised by the Imperial thinkers of the West, had—or must be made to have—the

## THE POLICY OF THE OPEN DOOR

common peculiarity of opening inwards ; and each was to have behind it the genius of the aforesaid places, smilingly bowing a welcome to the products of civilisation.

To drop from metaphor, it has been a noted feature of the development of western commercial activity, that its aggressive side has regarded the whole world as a potential market. "Uncivilised" countries, such as India, were to be taught the blessings of Brumagem ware and Manchester shoddy.

If, by any chance, in performing the highly desirable function of "paying for the goods" the uncivilised persons were foolish enough to suggest that there were certain economic reasons why the door should open both ways ; that purchase requires cash, and cash requires an outlet for the labour of the person who has to pay ; and that mutual trading calls for a co-ordination of values ; then the policy of the open-door, like a current of electricity, discovered its induced current, and the *policy of the shut mouth* was acted upon though not sung about. It worked, and works, roughly this way : "We favour you with the results of the labours of our workmen : their upkeep, their tobacco, their drink, their sports, are part of the price you have to pay. We buy your wheat because it is cheap. Let us have no talk of better prices. What do you "natives" want with civilised prices ? You do not drink, or

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

smoke ; you are indecent enough not to wear clothes : these things are all part of the price we are *not* going to pay you—so shut up."

It may be true, as the old saying has it, that "A shut mouth makes a wise head," but an involuntarily shut mouth may be other than a thing of wisdom to either the shutter or the shuttee. Activity that is allowed to express itself in thought and speech and reasonable deed, is not likely, in following the necessity of utterance, to seek subterranean and dangerous ways. Unfortunately, considerations such as these do not generally come within the sphere of practical politics or of aggressive commercialism. To talk of the universal law of reciprocity, or to state that, though Darwin was born in England, the law of evolution is not necessarily an exclusive product of the temperate zone, is to "talk metaphysics." The plain relationship between East and West is that the East must rest content to be 'developed' (which some translate by the nasty word exploited) entirely for its own good, by the West !

We do not deny that this method has its merits. Its very existence is, to the Indian mind, with its vision of an orderly universe, its justification. But what may be justifiable at one period of a country's history, may not—indeed, cannot—be justifiable at a later period ; and any attempt on its part to persist beyond

## THE POLICY OF THE OPEN DOOR.

its use will bring into activity an equally justifiable attempt to modify it, or to get rid of it. The law of progress is the law of life ; but the progress must be all-round. Any effort by one group of humanity to stand in the way of another's progress is a sign that the transgressor is on the way to falling out of the procession.

The catch-words of any corporate action are only safe when they are guided and checked by constant reference to some great principle ; and one of the most important of the principles which should govern the relationships between individuals and nations, is that which Professor Vaswani, M.A., casually enunciated in a college debate at Patiala, on Science and Art : "Self-expression, which is the source of all literature, is a primal instinct of human nature."

This is a simple truth, clear open to all who have kept an eye on things around them. But like all truths, its ramifications run far beyond the anticipation of the utterer. What is a primal instinct in human nature, is a primal factor also in its great groupings of races, nations, countries. "No man," said Charles Stewart Parnell, "can set bounds to a nation's advance." Within the nation the opportunity for self-expression must be given fully to all, men and women equally ; it must be given in education, and must involve the freedom of the teacher to attain to his and her own

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

self-expression by active participation in the earnest movements of humanity.

Between nations the same principle must apply. The India of to-day demands expression. Its immemorial treasures of philosophy, science and art are urging forward for chances to spend and be spent : they seek an *open door* for human betterment. The national consciousness is translating its age-long vision of the path to perfection into modern terms ; and the translation demands the *open mouth* of publication in her laws and institutions, no less than in her individual sanctified lives and her peerless literature.

## THE SCIENCE AND ART OF CO-OPERATION

It is the ordinary experience of human history that new phases in the evolution of the social organism go through a cycle, beginning with an enthusiastic revolt occasioned by some physical or spiritual necessity, passing on to a settled responsibility with enthusiasm confined to annual reports and revolt grown less than respectable, and ending either in a rupture of readjustment to some new life impulse, or in oblivion as a fixed part of the ordinary life of the day, according as the principles that were evoked in the first enthusiasm are or are not kept in the forefront of the thought and action of the followers of the movement.

I am not old enough to remember the beginnings of the modern co-operative movement in the West, but from my reading of the utterances of its promoters and the records of its early years, and from direct participation in its later tendencies in the North of England, I have had the feeling forced upon me that co-operation, in England at any rate, has come to the time when it has got to choose whether it will be numbered among the lost causes or the eternal verities.

There is numerical growth and power. I have seen a photograph of a street blocked with persons anxious

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

to spend money in a new co-operative shop ; but there was about it an air of struggle to add to dividends, that obscured ideals. On the surface there is a certain kind of enthusiasm, but it does not seem to get beyond the kitchen ceiling. It keeps mainly to the surface, and is less concerned than formerly in digging for the root ideas that are the inspiration of any true evolutionary movement and the assurance of its continuity and real success : it seems to look less for eternal principles than for quarterly interest, and to be moving away from the region of ideal and struggle where nothing fails like merely material success.

The English co-operative movement is to-day, as it has been from the beginning, a trading movement ; but it appears to me that the development of social thought is heading in the direction of making the movement's future depend on whether it is content to remain a purely trading movement, with little or nothing to distinguish it from an ordinary capitalist organisation save a larger number of smaller shareholders, or whether it will busy itself with great human ideals, and adjust the details of its organisation to them. The immediate and obvious activity of the English co-operative movement is the manufacture and distribution of essential commodities of life among its members. But the immediate and obvious thing is seldom the real thing, as the body of an individual

## THE SCIENCE AND ART OF CO-OPERATION.

is not by any means the whole individual. No thing is as great as its real self. Co-operation is infinitely greater than mere trading, though, in the present stage of human development, there cannot be co-operation without trading, unless it be simple credit co-operation that is the most prevalent feature in India, and that is a mere rudiment of co-operative possibilities. Unless, however, I am a very poor reader of the social barometer, it will not be long before many enthusiastic young minds in India will take up the work of co-operation, first in purchase and later in production ; and I purpose forestalling the practice with a short presentation of principles—the Science and Art of Co-operation.

The first principle of co-operation is involved in its first syllable—*co*. The aim of co-operation, cannot, if it is co-operation, mean only the good of co-operators. Ostensibly, and rightly, mutual good is the pretext for co-operation of any kind ; but no individual can enjoy a good thing alone : it must radiate to others. The *operation* of life, if it was capable of being limited to competition, would end in chaos. But the inter-dependence of all things puts a natural terminus to extremes, or, rather, rounds them back on one another. Co-operation as a principle has to have recourse to competition as an aid : competition as a social method has to fall back on co-operation amongst its own

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

adherents when it has the need to fight for its own ends. The point to realise is that progress is along the line of reducing competition and accentuating the *co* of the operation. The operation is without limit to its extent and number just because of the *co*; and the aim of humanitarian reform, as expressed in the phrase, "The greatest good of the greatest number," is only an emotional expression of the principle involved in the word "co-operation." It lifts the operation of any body of people from the low level of scheming for a comfortable balance sheet for a "Co-operative Society, Limited," to the inspiring attitude of working for the enrichment of "Humanity Unlimited."

It has sometimes been urged that the growth of the co-operative spirit would mean the diminution of the healthy and energising influence of competition, and for this reason the competitive social system is alleged to be the most likely to make for human progress. This notion, which is quite false, is due to the identifying of *competition* with the *competitive system*. But they are not similars : they are antitheses. The essence of *competition* is fairness, "playing the game," the equalising of conditions by the handicapping of the *stronger*, so as to demonstrate superiority in true proportion. The essence of the *competitive system* is to make the strong stronger and the weak weaker. It handicaps those *least qualified*, and so tends to widen

## THE SCIENCE AND ART OF CO-OPERATION

the gulf between groups of humanity, with the resultant evils of tyranny through purse-power, and slavery with the name of freedom on its lips. It is the aim of co-operation to give *all* the best chance, and if in the course of its progress a few must bear temporary loss, it must not allow any sentimentality to obscure the view of the fact that its end must surely be the permanent good of the many.

The English co-operative movement is at present engaged chiefly in purchase and exchange, and this element is certain to come largely into co-operative development in India. Co-operation in exchange is, however, a mere side issue : it must never be allowed to predominate in any country. The gibe of Napoleon that England was a nation of shop-keepers was no more true in his time than it is to-day. No nation can be a nation of shop-keepers. The commodities that the shop-keeper can distribute in a day require many months to produce. He may pass a hundred-weight of rice across his door in ten minutes, but seed-time and harvest have gone to its making. The scientific fact is that the *producing* power of a nation must always be by far the most prominent. Even today, while England boasts of its manufacturing industry, and has become "the workshop of the Allies," it is yet predominantly agricultural. A nation of shop-keepers would be a nation of slaves, dependent

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

upon the grace of producers outside itself, and hence accentuating the conditions of enforced dependence which make for poverty within the nation, and obsequiousness, insincerity, friction between itself and other nations. Exchange is necessary ; but the elaboration of mere exchange beyond exact necessity leads to impoverishment, and this is why co-operation seeks to eliminate the unnecessary middleman, who stands between producer and consumer, enriching himself with the diminished proceeds of the producer and the increased expenditure of the consumer.

Co-operation, therefore, in order to fulfil its ideals, must carry its principles into agriculture, after the manner of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society. In the work of that organisation, the science of co-operation is fully worked out. It puts the transit department in its proper place as servant of producer and consumer, and it sees the ideal of organisation as not merely to secure cheapness through efficiency, but to better the conditions of life in accordance with the expanding and ascending needs of an evolving humanity. In such a view, the objective of co-operation must naturally be the earth, from which alone real and new wealth can be produced. The encouragement of manufacturing industry must be kept to the *supplying* of needs, not their creation. The centrifugal force of feverish industrialism in Europe, with its urgent

## THE SCIENCE AND ART OF CO-OPERATION

necessity to "find markets," or make them, is now seen in all its horror as the origin of the anti-co-operative struggle on the battlefields of Europe. The demand of the future will be for the reduction of artificial labour, thereby breaking up the great economic-fever areas, and spreading labour out over the land to the infinite good of the people in health and equitably distributed wealth.

Let us now turn from the Science of Co-operation to its application in practice ; in short, to the Art of Co-operation.

The first rule of action of the true co-operator is the adjustment of his or her conduct, in every aspect towards the attainment of "the greatest good of the greatest number" of human beings. I have already shown that this attitude is inherent in the word *co-operation*. Any other repudiates the *co*.

With this rule in mind we observe that, whatever distinctions we may make as to capital and labour, workers and directors of work, producers, and consumers who produce nothing, *all are users*, and in using can aid in the attainment of the co-operative ideal.

In its lowest application, that is, in the combining to purchase direct from an organisation that identifies the interests of the middleman with the user (and also with the producer where the organisation makes its own articles) and therefore does away with a class in the

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

community that is at war with both producer and consumer, a long step is taken towards the spreading of the value of things more evenly over a wider area. This obviously must exercise a beneficent influence on human relationships, since much, indeed most, of the troubles that beset any community take their rise in the inequalities that at bottom are simply economical.

A further step is the using of home products to the utmost possible extent. On the surface this practice exhibits the paradoxical element that runs through all the relationships of existence in circumstances that must always show the contrariety of *self* operating against—or, rather, viewed more deeply, operating *with*—the urge to unity. It is quite easy to level the charge of exclusiveness against this phase of practical co-operation ; but an apparent exclusiveness that has for its aim, and is an essential instrument towards, a greater inclusiveness than the present constitution of society admits, is a quite different thing from the economic caste system whose inevitable tendency is towards making wider gulfs between the workers of humanity and the vast army of non-productive persons who are artificially created as a charge on the community through the absence of the co-operative method.

The first effect of a universal resolution to use predominantly home products—particularly in Britain

## THE SCIENCE AND ART OF CO-OPERATION

and other manufacturing countries—would be an increase in agricultural pursuits in the production of foods at present purchased abroad, and an increase in allied industries dealing with agricultural bye-products. Many more people would be employed in healthy and remunerative work, and national wealth would be enormously increased.

But there is a wider effect in view. It is plain that where a country reduces to a minimum its enforced dependence on other countries, it is also reducing to a minimum the elements in international life that make for conflict. Whatever sentiments of a racial or humanitarian character are exalted as war cries, and whatever justification such sentiments may possess for the defensive side in a conflict, at the root of the matter there is the simple brutal fact that false commercial needs, arising out of an anti-co-operative social organisation, impel towards exploitation and the finding of markets. People with some share of imagination who realised the true spirit of trade expansion in Europe, saw that a collision of selfishness was sure to come, unless through some miracle of interposition the heart of humanity was touched with wisdom. A detail of this phase of the subject is that the reduction of dependence on outside sources means also the reduction of overseas transit and the naval protection of trade routes. In such circumstances an outbreak of

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

war would hardly touch the necessities of life, and would almost entirely become simply an inconvenience to the travelling public : but, indeed, in such circumstances the contingency of war would be the remotest possibility, since its primary cause, economic greed, would have been removed.

There has been much talk in Britain of the capture of German trade. If that means the swelling of industrial activities, and the further decrease of agricultural activities, it may well be the capture of a very white elephant that must be fed and housed and clothed from still further sources outside the country, thus adding to the country's obligation to powers beyond itself, and so increasing the danger of starvation in time of conflict. There is one kind of German trade that should be captured by Britain and every other country ; that is, the trade in those articles necessary for their own use which heretofore they obtained abroad, and which can be made in the several countries themselves.

In addition to the use of home products, the true co-operator should also have an eye to those products that are least valuable to the nation, and reduce their use to a minimum. Here he will come upon some interesting problems of personal taste. I knew a young man who discovered that the fostering of cattle-raising in Ireland was one of the influences enforcing emigration, and he promptly turned vegetarian. It is,

## THE SCIENCE AND ART OF CO-OPERATION

of course, quite obvious; that where land is transferred from the raising of crops to the raising of cattle, a displacement of labour must take place. One man, where cattle are simply used for butchery, can attend to a herd of hundreds roaming over many acres of land : the same land raising crops would require the labour of numerous hands, and would return immensely more wealth to the community than pasture-lands. Cattle-rearing after western methods starves the worker, and concentrates a smaller share of national wealth in fewer master-hands that are degraded to participation in a brutalising tyranny over the animal creation.

It is in this connection that the adoption of true co-operative practice would show its most marked effects. The demand for increased quantities of home-grown ~~crops~~, consequent on the dropping of cattle-rearing for food, would make an enormous change on the face of the earth, but especially in the so-called civilised countries that see no contradiction between the sentiments of liberty and justice, and the practice of a habit that imposes agony and hideous death on millions of sentient creatures daily, condemns a whole class to an occupation fit only for devils, denies human beings access to the earth, and drives them into the horrors of city slums and unhealthy occupations.

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

The co-operative influence must also be carried into political life. Some co-operators in a recent crisis in England declared that co-operation had nothing to do with politics. It happened, however, that the circumstance that drew out this declaration was an attempt by a body of co-operative women to influence legislation towards the removal of a certain restriction on the activity of women in the national life ; and an honest facing of the matter shows that the attempt to closure the women was simply the coming back to life of the old selfish anti-co-operative spirit which can only be exorcised by the earnest and unqualified application of true co-operative ideals.

Co-operation has nothing to do with politics in the party sense, but it has everything to do with politics in its true sense as the science of good government. The War compelled the powers-that-be in most of the belligerent countries to become partial co-operators. The middleman was put in leash in the railways of Britain ; co-operation took the place of the chaos that prevailed in transit ! the nationalisation of the railways, which was once held to be a matter of politics, has become at least a temporary fact outside politics. It is all to the good that something of the spirit of co-operation has come into the national life even in the presence of fear and danger. It will be better still when the leaders of the nations recognise that what is

## THE SCIENCE AND ART OF CO-OPERATION

necessary for the national good in war-time is necessary for the national good in peace-time, for peace at the present stage of the world's history is also war—the perpetual struggle of the masses of humanity to find the bare means of subsistence, while everywhere there is abundant evidence of enough and to spare if all co-operated in the work of production and transit, instead of a small proportion of the people being permitted to make the essentials of life a matter of barter for mere personal gain.

## DIETETICS AND DIET-ETHICS

It is frequently said of food reformers, by way of reproach, that they are always thinking about what they eat. Twenty years' experience of fleshless diet on my own part, and of association with practically every confessed vegetarian in Ireland, and many in Great Britain, enables me to say that the truth is quite the other way round. Food reformers are *not* always thinking of what *they* eat ; but they are very frequently thinking of what *other people* eat.

But the fact of the matter is, neither food reformers nor flesh-eaters *think* half enough about what they eat. There is much knowledge of food-tables and calories abroad in the land ; but I am one of those who would quite willingly scrap a good deal of such knowledge if thereby the mind might be left freer to apprehend clearly some of the unreckoned food values that cannot be put under a microscope or symbolised in a graph.

There is nothing more worthy of our careful thought, as entities in a physical world, than food. Whatever powers we may or may not possess as disembodied spirits, it is certain that our life on the surface of this planet is dependent upon and conditioned by the body. Body is the exchange between the human unit and all else. In peace or war, to life in all its activities, as life,

## DIETETICS AND DIET-ETHICS

body is the essential instrument, and body can only be supported by food.

If, however, body and food are practically synonymous terms, there is, when we come to look into details, an extraordinary difference between the quantity of food that we eat and the actual results achieved *in body*. Take only bread. Suppose that our average daily ration of bread for the first thirty-five years of life is half a pound. Multiply this by the number of days, deduct forty per cent. for unassimilated matter cast out of the body; this leaves a total weight of 2,560 lbs. which we have concealed about our persons during these years. Out of this we have only succeeded in swelling our eight pounds weight at birth to, say, 150 lbs. at thirty-five. We have, in short, assimilated in bread only, the weight of seventeen grown men or women, and all we have to show for it is one body, which has been reckoned lately as valued commercially for its fat, iron, phosphorous, albumen, etc., at about twenty five rupees !

What have we done with the bread we have consumed ? Where have we put it ? We talk of " knocking corners off one another "—an excellent salutary operation, always pleasant to the aggressor ; but the operation is a metaphorical one ; we do not observe the chunks falling away ; and yet it is perfectly obvious that we actually do throw away the surplusage between what

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

we have assimilated up to any point in life, and the actual quantity retained and analyzable at that point.

There must, therefore, be some expulsive power other than that of elimination, some atomizer within the physical body ; and the unity and continuity of personality, which runs parallel with the phenomenon of disintegration, leads us to infer in this expulsive entity a greater stability than there is in the body. In short, we may regard it as an inhabitant of a house, or a player on an instrument, or an artificer with a cunning tool ; and if we do not care to adopt any philosophical, religious or mystical term for its identification, it may serve our purpose to call it the *supra-body*.

Let us look at the curious relationship that exists between the body and what we have called the supra-body. We may symbolise the body as a square. Its great basic characteristic is the bony framework, the skeleton, and its adjuncts. Then comes the covering that gives the sense of physical unity, the tissues and muscular system. To these are imparted life through the blood-stream ; and all are co-ordinated in action by the nerve-system.

But that is not an analysis of the whole human being. There is an admirable collection of bodies in the antiseptic atmosphere of the crypt of an ancient church in Dublin, but we do not look to them for any

## DIETETICS AND DIET-ETHICS

service in the actual life of to-day. The relatively stable entity that built them up, and scattered their surplus atoms in life, has retired ; it no longer "strikes fiery off;" the characteristics of the body are there, but the characteristics of the supra-body are absent ; there is no manifestation of the expulsive entity ; which is the same thing as saying there is no life.

Now this consideration gives a rational explanation of the scientific formula that a food, in order to meet the requirements of nature, should be in the proportion of 17 parts of body-building material to 83 parts of energising material ; and the respect which *bread* has been held in from time immemorial, is justified if we analyse the proportions of these food elements in the quantity which we have already referred to ; for the total weight of body-building elements assimilated from bread amounts to the weight of three men, and the total weight of energising elements amounts to the weight of thirteen men, which bears the same relationship as 17 to 83—say, 1 to 5.

But the business of this expulsive entity, the supra-body, is not expulsive merely. The atomizing process is manifested in a set of characteristics roughly corresponding to the characteristics of the physical body.

First, there is the basic characteristics of Power, on which, so to say, we plant our feet and stand upright, with the assertion that we are human beings,

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

not logs of felled timber. This characteristic passes into the further one, which we may call Energy. By its exercise we mix among our fellows in the business of life ; and out of that mixing comes the inevitable attraction or repulsion that accompanies all human activity, and which we may include in the term Feeling. Lastly, our expression of these characteristics, and also of the master characteristic of thought and its communication to our fellows, is the outcome of purpose and volition, which we may sum up in the term Consciousness.

Here we have a figure of the complete *human* being. I am not here concerned with other and subtler aspects of human nature. My immediate purpose is, by a process of simple thinking, based on common experience, to show the relationship between the purely physical body and its manifestations in life, and to point out one or two plain morals connected with the question of food.

Food reformers in the West are often met with a feeling of resentment for what is regarded as their unwarranted interference with the right of an individual to do what he or she pleases with his or her own body. Now even the most superficial grasp of the facts which I have brought out will show that such a claim to do what one pleases with one's body is entirely out of line with the law of life. Even ordinary physi-

## DIETETICS AND DIET-ETHICS

cal necessity requires activity, and activity of any kind brings us into relationship with our fellows. To claim independence in eating would necessitate isolation and inactivity. The result would be, not life, but madness in the mind, something like elephantiasis in the body, and a miserable death. Everyone of these powers or faculties, or whatever you care to call them, exists and develops entirely and only by virtue of *out-going*. Think of any one of them, and the first step in your thought is outward, and takes you into some phase of human association, with its necessary code of mutual conduct.

And that is why my mind can never be persuaded to regard as complete and satisfying, any presentation of food reform that proceeds no further than physical considerations. By all means let us have scientific knowledge of the proteins and carbohydrates, and their atomic structure ; but I want to know something of their moral character as well. I want to know, not less as to how they will build up tissue and make energy, but more as to the kind of influence which that tissue and energy will enable me to exert on my fellows. This is the *social function* of food : I have made bold to call this social aspect the *science of diet-ethics*, as distinct from the physical aspect merely, which is the science of dietetics. In it we have, I believe, the final justification of food reform propa-

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

ganda—and also the final test of faith and practice. Passing years add to the melancholy list in one's acquaintance of those who took up food reform "for the stomach's sake," and afterwards gave it up for the same reason ; but I cannot call up among my friends any who, having first apprehended the significance of the supra-physical aspect of food, or climbed to it through the physical, went back.

The social aspect of food reform, or the science of diet-ethics, has regard to the question of *personal economy*, not simply with a view to enabling the person to have more money to spend, but to have more opportunity for the development of human faculties, in balance and happiness, to the furthest extent of their possibilities. In this respect a simple vegetarian dietary is normally many times cheaper than a flesh dietary. A pound of beef, brown bread and evaporated bananas stand related as 57, 150 and 250 food units.

The science of diet-ethics has regard also to *personal health*, not only from the point of view of the comfort of the person, but also his apparent though incalculable influence as a suggestor of disease in others, and a centre of disturbance and irritation. The withdrawal of a single worker from productive or useful activity, and the tying up of attendants, ought to be a matter of great concern to the community. Food reformers know that the risk of functional or organic

## DIETETICS AND DIET-ETHICS

disease is reduced to a minimum in the eating of non-flesh foods ; and that that minimum is still further minimised by excluding mineral and foreign substances.

In these two aspects, the personal merges into the general, and leads us to the larger consideration of *national economics* and *national health*. Others besides myself have presented detailed studies of the agricultural problem in the light of food reform. I shall here only offer an impression. The journey by the L.N.W. Railway from Liverpool to London is to me like a journey with Dante through the Inferno. I know nothing more appalling than the human degradation on which the industrialism of the first half of the journey is based ; and I know nothing more pathetic than the awful naked solitudes, devoid of man or beast, of the second half. England has deserted Nature ; and Nature may ultimately desert her, by denying her the only stable wealth—agricultural productivity—and the only sound health, that which comes from contact with sun and air and earth.

What stability of wealth or soundness of health can come to a nation that allows a circumstance, such as I shall now relate, to be possible ? I was travelling to a Midland town in England five years ago. I sat in a corner seat of a railway carriage, trying to induce sleep. A cattle-dealer entered at a station, and after him an inspector of the Royal Society for the Prevention of

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

**Cruelty to Animals.** They had both been to a local fair, and their conversation, through which I slept soundly *on the outside*, gave me the following story : A drove of fifteen cattle was driven to the fair from a town seventeen miles away. Two of the cattle reached the fair in a saleable condition ; thirteen were in a state of collapse ; one died, and on examination was found to be *tuberculous* all over. Now if the fair had been five miles nearer the starting-point of the cattle, their condition would not have been disclosed : they would probably have been sold ; and in a couple of days their debility and disease would have been scattered through hundreds of English homes !

Finally, let us observe that the law of life compels us to give ; we cannot otherwise live ; and the quality of our life, expressed in physical and mental energies, in feeling, in tone, in colour, must be influenced for good or ill by what we take in. Of itself nothing is evil ; the evil, and the responsibility for that evil, arises in the exercise of the supra-faculties. When we, eating flesh-meat, introduce clogging and irritating substances into our systems, that will distort and cloud and vitiate our expression among our fellows, and carry these undesirable conditions to the supra-bodies of our fellows, as theirs are carried to us, then we stand as dietetic and diet-ethic sinners ; then that which *of itself* is perfectly innocent, is turned into a positive

## DIETETICS AND DIET-ETHICS

evil. This is the meaning of the profound utterance, so dark on a superficial reading, in the Christian scriptures, that it is not that which entereth into a man that defileth him, but that which cometh from him.

As we take, so we give. As we give, so we get back. We are not merely building and energising our own bodies ; we are building and energising the bodies of others ; we are ourselves food for millions of unseen mouths, and our influence is being immortalised in customs, laws and institutions ; and the first and last word of *diet-ethics* is that we shall see to it that from us shall go forth such elements as will in due time build up a balanced and well-nourished body corporate, energised without blindness or passion, feeling with universality and without self-seeking, thinking with incorruptible honesty.

## THE ARTIST AS REFORMER

To the Indian who is awake it must be a matter for much cogitation to observe with what tenacity western people stick to the inartistic habit of flesh-eating. So deeply has the habit become ingrained in races that regard themselves as pioneers of refinement, that a "poor heathen Indian" who decides to renounce the faith of his fathers is not considered quite safely within the new fold until he has dined on a good beef-steak.

Yet notwithstanding the prevalent blind following of the carnivorous habit by the masses of western peoples, there is a growing propaganda in favour of a return to humanity's natural food, the products of the earth. This propaganda has been expedited to an enormous extent by the War. Early in the War the Board of Trade issued a leaflet calling on the people to curtail the use of flesh foods, and practically every newspaper published many columns of instructions as to how animal foods might be entirely abolished. The vegetarians have taken full advantage of the situation, but a certain reserve in their magazines seems to suggest a fear that a return to normal conditions will mean a return also to normal bad habits in food.

## THE ARTIST AS REFORMER

One hopeful feature of the food reform agitation in England is the number of men and women of high intellectual attainment who are prepared to write and lecture on every phase of the question of dietetics ; and the more deeply the history of reform is gone into, the greater is the number of men and women of pre-eminence in literature and the arts in all ages who are found to have revolted naturally against flesh-eating.

Unfortunately, to the general run of humanity, the appeal to history is usually regarded as the last entrenchment of a defeated argument. The fact that the great Greek philosopher, Pythagoras, was a vegetarian, while it has a certain comfortable appeal to the vanity of the converted, who think of him as a brother, is of no practical service in a frontal attack on the fortified superstition that dead bodies of animals are a factor and sign of civilisation.

It appears necessary, therefore, that the western food-reform movement, if it is to bring the masses into line with the majority of the world, must go on providing living examples of their beliefs and practices from among the leaders of thought and artistic activity.

The special usefulness of brilliant contemporaries to any reform movement is not merely spectacular : it is also aesthetic. It is well to direct humanitarian sentiment towards the problems of life ; but one eye must be kept on the sentiment, and the other on the problem,

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

for sentiment is sometimes adjusted to taste and conduct, and not always made a spring of action. It is well, also, to evoke justice as a basis of human and non-human relationships, but justice is not always just, and not infrequently weights the scales in favour of habit and desire. In short, the appeal to sentiment or justice must always be somewhat unstable, because these things belong to the region of life where the flux of things is most felt.

To get at the fundamental certainty of an individual, we must get as near the soul as possible ; and the nearest possible is the aesthetic attitude—the characteristic response to the appeal of beauty and harmony and freedom. By virtue of a tenacious allegiance to some intellectual or moral principle, a person may achieve a rigid consistency of action ; but it is only when the hidden artist in each individual is unfolded and expressed, that the life of word and act moves in the grand repose of inevitability.

Herein lies the special value to any movement, aesthetic or political, in East or West, of contemporary supporters who are distinguished in artistic achievement. They appeal with a directness and conviction that overleap the barriers of sense and mind. The greater the artist, the less recourse is there to mere controversy, and the more to an intuitive apprehension of the beautiful and worthy things in life. The bare

## THE ARTIST AS REFORMER

fact that George Bernard Shaw is a vegetarian is probably of greater value to the food reform movement than a dozen pamphlets from his pen. Argumentation may question his scientific data, or reject his hypotheses, but it cannot get behind the one thing that matters : that Bernard Shaw, the incomparable artist, is a vegetarian because—well, just *because he is* : because, underneath the operations of his phenomenally active mind, the fundamental aesthetic attitude of his genius made inevitable the banishment from his table of the ugly, the inharmonious, the tyrannical.

There are many more artists in the ranks of food reform even in the West than are known to the public, and the movement is the poorer for their reticence. It is remarkable that it is the greatest who are not afraid to make known their defection from convention : a great creator like Tolstoy, a great interpreter of his mind in drama like Lydia Yavorska. These and others are great in art because they are great in soul. They tell us that only they who follow out the art of life in fulness of beauty, can fully and greatly live the life of art ; and in their lives they help towards the growing emergence, within all men and women, of the Divine Artist, who will one day look through humanity's eyes upon a world of beauty and freedom and peace.

## THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS OF FOOD REFORM

In the history of struggle which is implied in the term *evolution*, we recognise an impulse towards mastery, not merely as the driving-force but also as the *aim* of evolution. The impulse towards mastery lies behind the evolutionary struggle ; the attainment of mastery lies in front of it. In short, evolution *is* mastery. Atom asserts power over atom ; species dominates species ; kingdom rises against kingdom ; the "whole universe groaneth and travaileth" from stage to stage, ever ascending, ever transcending.

Now this struggle which is the essential condition of evolution, is the active state of opposing forces : mastery involves the *master* and the *mastered* ; and this dual principle operates throughout the entire domain of nature, physical and metaphysical. Force and substance, aspiration and limitation, positive and negative, masculine and feminine, these and a thousand other "opposites" are but the masks and disguises of the fundamental two-in-one ; localisations of the universal, as a number of diseases may be local expressions of one root-malady.

## THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS OF FOOD REFORM

It is clear, however, that the balance of power must be, to some degree, in favour of the positive or aggressive element on the field of the evolutionary conflict. Equality, in the strict sense of the term, would create a dead-lock. The weakest must go to the wall in order that the fittest may survive ; the neck of the ineffectual is put under the heel of the master.

Now the sum-total of the struggle between the aggressive and repressive factors in the evolutionary process, taken at any particular moment in the kingdoms below the human, would be expressed in some terms signifying an advance in the development of physical types. But along with this advance in what we may call a *horizontal* direction, there has been a simultaneous elaboration of *qualities* in what we may call a *vertical* direction. On the physical foundation there has arisen an edifice that is not merely physical ; we are cognizant of something which we may term the *effect* of the edifice, not its bricks and mortar, so to speak ; something which we recognise as the characteristic expression of the man or animal, apart from his anatomical structure and biological phenomena. The tiny bantam in the farmyard chasing the dorking four times his size, is the expression of a differentiation of qualities apart from the differentiation of form, qualities which, in this parti-

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

cular case, are disproportionate to the physical bulk of the rivals.

Whether this simultaneous horizontal and vertical movement is regular or spasmodic, there is, somewhere along the line of advance, a point at which automatic instinct evolves into consciousness, and again a point at which this consciousness becomes self-conscious. In the life of the plant we observe automatic obedience to natural laws ; and though we see something like consciousness in the pushing out of feelers in the direction of support, we do not attribute to such an action the *mental* activity which is manifested in a dog's attempt to open a door ; nor do we in the life of the animal detect any evidence of power to examine its own mental states, which power is the sign and token of *self*-consciousness. Self-consciousness, so far as we can observe, belongs to man alone : he stands upon the apex of the pyramid of evolution and cries : "I know—and I know that I know."

It is evident that when this state of consciousness has been attained, every further presentation to the consciousness must result in its expansion, strengthening and intensification. To the conscious ego there are only two things in the universe—*itself* and its *not-self* ; every addition to or modification of the external universe (the *not-self*) which is presented to the conscious self, causes an addition to or modification of

## THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS OF FOOD REFORM

that self : knowledge is increased, we say ; taste is cultivated ; the judgment is quickened and made surer; atom by atom the individual becomes more individualised : seven years hence he may smile at his conviction of to-day , he will continue to grow long after time has ceased to " add one cubit unto his stature."

Inasmuch, therefore, as all further progress on the part of the conscious individual must be in the direction of further individualization, we may accept it as a law that the *aim* of the evolutionary struggle is the achievement of complete individualization of consciousness. Where that process may ultimately land the race does not here concern us : it is sufficient for us now to grasp the fact that such development is inevitable ; and it becomes the duty of the conscious individual to co-operate with the evolutionary process by directing his efforts towards the elimination from his life of everything that is calculated to bind him to things pertaining merely to the horizontal plane of his life, since the purpose of those things, so far as he is concerned, has been achieved in the evolution of a perfected physical and mental vehicle, and in the attainment of self-consciousness.

The law of life says *Onward ! There* can be no pause : rather does the pace quicken as the consciousness rises : as the tone of life is lifted the vibration increases. Yet if we look around and consider the

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

plain facts of life in the light of this truth, we cannot help being appalled at the universal flagrant violation of the evolutionary law which not merely obtains as an accidental circumstance, but avowedly as the basis of social organization. The necessities of the body, external and internal, are made occasion, not for harmoniously organized effort towards the supplying of all men with such necessities, but for a chaotic scramble of being against being, in order that, by the creation of artificial values, one may prosper at the expense of another, so that while some are overworked, others are starved, and both are withdrawn from the real business of life—*to live*. In short, we may state it as an incontrovertible fact that less than one-tenth of the energy of mankind is bestowed upon the vital work of quickening the consciousness, the bulk of its energy being spent in work which decentralizes and dissipates the consciousness. “Labour not for the meat which perisheth ;” “take no thought for the morrow,” are commands which are set at nought in almost every relationship of civilized life ; yet they are the utterances of a perfect understanding of the condition absolutely necessary to the advancement of the race, namely, the condition of perfect freedom. There must be labour, there must be taking of thought. But it is one thing for the members of a community to combine in fellowship for the production of that which

## THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS OF FOOD REFORM

is necessary to their welfare with the minimum of time and friction, and it is quite another thing for individual to be set against individual, and for envy, hatred, and malice to be let loose in industrial strife, and in international conflicts, not one of which is undertaken for the only purpose in the universe which is worthy of conscious beings—the uplifting of the consciousness, but solely for the establishment of some phase of self-consciousness in relation to the lower strata of development from which mankind should be emerging, but in which it seems inclined to fossilise itself. Whether we recognise it or not, the law is woven into the very tegument of the universe, that the attainment of the evolutionary purpose, the achievement of complete individualization of consciousness, is dependent on the attainment of complete individual freedom : any interdependence in the relationships of mankind which is not voluntary, but enforced, is in direct opposition to the essential condition for the evolution of consciousness, since it leads to struggle on the lower planes of man's life, and delays the higher evolution of the individual towards complete consciousness.

Now this freedom which we have seen to be the essential condition for the higher evolution of mankind, may be expressed as the attainment of perfect balance between the constituent elements of a community such as that described in Plato's *Republic*. But such

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

balance must first manifest itself in a prepondering section of the community. We must recognise the necessity of a perfect social organization for the fullest expression of the consciousness of humanity in the future ; but that organization will never come until it has first become formulate in the aspiration of the individual. The life of the individual must be so ordered that the exaggeration of an appetite shall not affect detrimentally the operation of the reason or the expression of affection, since reason and affection are of greater value to the community and the individual than the satisfaction of an appetite beyond the limits of absolute necessity. Observe, however, that this attainment of balance and mastery does not mean the suppression or eradication of any attribute of the body. Our senses are the instruments whereby we draw to us the things needful for the sustenance and continuance of the race, and they are thus as essential to us as the sublimest ideal. But it is characteristic of the senses that they press urgently towards their satisfaction—and a little beyond ; and, granted the little beyond, pile up an increasing desire which crystallizes into a tyrannous necessity. From this increase beyond what is absolutely necessary there arises physical derangement which reacts on the mind, and ultimately results in the impoverishment of the consciousness. Fortunate it would be for the race if this impoverishment of the

## THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS OF FOOD REFORM

individual consciousness ended with the individual ; but it is far otherwise ; its effect is felt by those around ; it is passed as a hereditary disability to posterity ; it expresses itself in prejudices and false views that react upon, and retard the reformation of, institutions and customs which, in their turn, tend to degrade the consciousness of the race in general, as their precursors degraded the unit in particular. Thus the *vicious circle* is completed ; the act of the individual reacts on the individual ; "no man liveth unto himself ;" "we are members one of another ;" the perfect freedom of the individual can only be attained in the perfect freedom of the whole ; "all men's good" must be "each man's rule ;" and the supreme working principle in the affairs of men must be :—*To take from our fellows, human and sub-human, the irreducible minimum of necessity, and to give to them the maximum of possibility.* This is the golden rule : it has been paraphrased in countless ways in the religions and philosophies of the world ; its application is universal. Let us apply it to the matter of food, seeking to evolve principles without reference to questions of expediency or fear of the frown of vested interest.

The minimum of necessity which we are to take from others can only be reached by so living our lives that in matters pertaining to the body we shall be as *self-dependent* as possible. Any breach of this rule

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

will result in the imposition on someone else of the task of providing us with the things which we will not provide for ourselves, and such imposition is at variance with the perfect freedom which we have seen to be an essential condition for the attainment of our evolutionary destiny, complete consciousness. This self-dependence—which must not be confused with any false idea of so-called independence—demands the simplification of life, the abolition of non-essentials, and the bringing of every individual into direct contact with the prime source of supply for every need—the earth. Conformity with this principle—which, being essential to the evolution of the race, must inevitably take place in the future—means the wiping out of a host of artificial pursuits, the disappearance of cities as we know them, and—what is of chief interest to the food reformer—the abolition of the cattle traffic.

Again, since the maximum of physical and mental well-being are essential to the highest and most beneficent expression of any creature, our working principle demands that all foods shall be of the highest quality : that is, that they shall yield the greatest possible amount of nourishment with the least possible strain on the mechanism of the body, and shall leave behind them no trace of derangement or disease. Such foods cannot include flesh, which yields little nourishment for much strain, and the essential nature of which

## THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS OF FOOD REFORM

is to leave behind it a long list of physical and mental ailments.

Further, our working principle demands the choosing of such foods as are most freely yielded ; for in proportion as a food is procured by false pretences—as in fishing, by cowardly cunning—as in rabbit trapping, or by force exercised against force—as in cattle slaughtering, it is a negation of the law of giving : the principle of giving the maximum of possibility permits the withholding of no atom of sympathy and love “ for the meanest thing that lives ;” and every calorie of energy spent in *taking* by force or craft means a diminution of the energy that should be spent in *giving*.

It will now be clear that the question of the reform of diet is no trivial matter involving only the consideration of what we shall eat, but that rather it has behind it the whole force of evolution, and before it a glorious share in the liberation of humanity from everything that binds its higher nature to its lower, like Prometheus to the cliff.

I have said that the food reform has before it a glorious *share* in the liberation of humanity, and I would emphasise what I have already stated : that the golden rule of *give* and *take* which has been deduced as the supreme working principle in line with the power of evolution towards complete consciousness, applies.

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

with equal force in every department of life, and will be found trying to realise itself not only in the food reform movement, but in every other reform which we see around us, whether we agree with its aims and methods or not. Consciously or unconsciously, men and nations to-day are turning inwards in search of the truth that the circumference will take care of itself if the centre be pivoted aright : that the greatness which endures depends not on the length of the sceptre but on the stability of the throne : that it is in the inner kingdom that the mastery must be achieved. The kingdom that endures is not won by power nor by might asserted objectively, for the power that has to move beyond its own domain bears evidence of internal impoverishment and central weakness. Not by power, not by might, but by the spirit, by the operation of the individual will to obtain perfect mastery, perfect balance, perfect freedom in the inner kingdom. When that will is in a state of activity, like a great magnet it will adjust the universe to itself : all things will work together for the achievement of its stupendous purpose, the only purpose worthy the efforts of man, the one purpose of the universe—the evolution of a consciousness that must at length embrace the universe and thus become “perfect even as its Father in Heaven is perfect.” This is the expression of the highest spiritual aspiration: it will now also

## THE PHILOSOPHIC BASIS OF FOOD REFORM

be seen to be the highest philosophical view of the universe and man.

There will be struggle, there will be defeat ; but there will also be an invincible advance. Thus it has ever been ; for what have been the tumults of history, its revolutions and reactions, its progressions and retrogressions, its turmoil of institutions, laws, customs, expedients, but the titanic struggles of the spirit of man to break through, master, and readjust his limits in a growing conformity with this impulse towards outward and inward freedom ? This, in some shape or degree, is the inspiration of all reform, its key, its supreme test : this also is the justification, the solace and prophecy of triumph for all who, in all times and places, have heard in their hearts " the still, sad music of humanity" and sub-humanity, and have lifted up their voices in the cause of truth and justice.

## THE RELATIONSHIP OF CULTURE AND TRAINING IN EDUCATION

There is a quaint notion in the West that the capacity to quote from Shakespeare and Alexander Pope is sign of culture. Generally the quotations are misquotations, such as "A poor thing but my own" instead of "An ill-favoured thing, but mine own," or "A little knowledge (instead of *learning*) is a dangerous thing." I fear that the quotation standard of culture prevails also in India. I have been advised that the proper way to appeal to Indian audiences in lectures is to drag in somewhere, irrelevantly if need be, a stanza or two from the "Bhagavad Gita." I have refrained from this practice as far as is possible to a lover of that venerable scripture, but recently, in lecturing to a large audience in the north of India, a phrase from it came so fitly to my mind that I had to use it. I got the length of saying, "As Sri Krishna said," when an outburst of applause held up the quotation and left me with a horrible sense of impending anti-climax. I quite agree that anything that Sri Krishna said in the Gita is worthy of applause even in advance ; but I fear the applause was not intended as a tribute to pure wisdom, for there were deep silences at other unlabelled

## CULTURE AND TRAINING IN EDUCATION

paraphrases from the same source : it was a tribute to the supposed culture of an individual who could quote from an Indian classic.

I am in hearty disagreement with the quotation-test for culture. If it were truly applied, then in art on the one hand and in music on the other, the highest place would be taken by the cinematograph and the gramophone.

Culture goes much deeper than memory, and the power of mental reproduction. Its sign is not in what an individual can repeat, but in what an individual brings of interpretative capacity to life as well as to literature and the arts. I could produce from an Indian Colleg, estudents who could repeat from memory the following sentence from Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies" which was included in their course one year :

" You had better get rid of the smoke and the organ-pipes, both ; leave them and the Gothic windows and the painted glass, to the property-man ; give up your carburetted hydrogen ghost in one healthy expiration, and look after Lazarus at the door-step,

but he would be the more cultured person who, never having seen the sentence before, had the cultural knowledge to get at its meaning directly, for that knowledge would include English industrial life, western music, European architecture and decoration,

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

and the terminology of the theatre, chemistry and the Bible.

Even that is far from the true culture, which is simply the fundamental occupation of humanity (farming) carried up from the soil into human nature with perfect parallelism. Culture means tillage : *colo*, I till. It means the breaking up of the fallow ground of ignorance by the sharp plough of experience, the sowing of the seeds of knowledge of good—and evil, the process of growth to fruition, each particular species working according to the laws of its own inner nature, figs yielding figs, not cactus ; cactus claiming the right to be cactus (even spiny cactus if it pleases) not plantains. That is the first point to grasp clearly : that culture is from within. The second point to grasp clearly is that what applies to the individual applies also to the nation.

It is obvious, in this view of culture, that any talk of taking the culture of any race of age and giving it to another, is a contradiction. You may, of course, hybridise, and produce interesting monstrosities. We have an interesting fruit in the West called the Loganberry which is, if I remember rightly, a hybridisation of the blackberry, and the raspberry. It sounds delicious to those who know the special flavours of these two fruits : it suggests one blackberry *plus* one raspberry, perhaps divided by two : in reality it is a

## CULTURE AND TRAINING IN EDUCATION

mixture that is neither, each element having influenced the other not towards the development, but towards the renunciation, of its own distinctive quality. That is not culture, it is mere cross-breeding. You cannot impose culture. You can only draw it out from its own centre. Culture, like murder, will out, but its law of nature is not accumulation from outside sources, but growth from inner sources.

It is because of this consideration, that those who have the matter of education in India at heart find themselves compelled to seek new ways for the bringing, for example, of European culture to India. Most of them, I think, believe that India needs European culture ; though she needs it somewhat less urgently than Europe needs Indian culture. We all need one another. The point is that the knowledge must be voluntarily obtained. Japan going to Europe and America in search of ideas on religious culture, and then gently but firmly deciding that her own immemorial faith would serve her turn, was on the real way to culture. The worrying of an Indian schoolboy with the pessimism of a noble blackguard because the poetry of Lord Byron happens to be set in British school curricula is *not* the way to literary culture. The culture that India shall take from the West or the Farther East, must be the culture that India wants, not what Europe wants India to want. If India wants it,

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

then it will be in affinity with her nature, and become assimilated to it.

If there was any justification for the imposition of the culture of one race on another, it would be in favour of Indian culture in my opinion, for the reason that the genius of Indian life, as it discloses itself to me, is of the very nature of culture itself : it *gives*, whereas the culture that I was reared in is one whose genius is to *take*. Notwithstanding the strongly expressed desire that certain German statesmen voiced, to *give* German culture to the world, we know very well that the giving is in hope of substantial return. True culture of the giving kind could never have involved itself in the vast ironical contradiction of the Great War. The pseudo culture of the uncoloured races, as demonstrated by the war, is a blind alley out of which western humanity is now blasting its way towards freedom. Eastern culture has the possibility of being a great highway, inasmuch as it sets spiritual attainment in this life above material possession, and puts the holy man or woman higher than the prince. Every student of geography knows that a movement of the atmosphere inward to a centre leads to storm, to the winds of passion (if I may so symbolise it), the lightnings and thunders of wrath, and the tears of sorrow. On the other hand, a movement outward from a centre leads to calm, clear skies, sunshine and

## CULTURE AND TRAINING IN EDUCATION

happiness." Such is the difference, broadly speaking between a materialistic and a spiritualistic culture.

We cannot escape the cultural urge, the tillage process that is inherent in the nature of the universe and humanity. We sometimes refer to the so-called savage races as uncultured, but there is no such thing as un-culture. Culture is a positive without a negative. If we do not consciously put our hands to the plough and harrow, the pruning hook and the irrigation rope, we shall not find flowers or fruit or rice in our patch of universe ; neither shall we find *nothing* : we shall find either the primitive culture of the jungle, or the degenerate culture that has reverted to type. There is a deep truth in the statement that "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." We cannot be at peace, but it would be nearer the truth to say that the mischief was also a sign of the Divine urge, the cultural stamp, the act of sacrifice and expression that gave us the world with its elements that we are pleased to term good, and others that we regard as mischievous. The pranks of Bala Krishna are not mere stories to please children : they are shadowings forth of the Divine nature. Rabindranath has expressed the cultural urge at its highest when he sings,

My Poet, is it thy desire to see thy creation through my eyes, and to stand at the portals of my ears silently to listen to thine own eternal harmony ?

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

But it is reflected also in the fingers of every little girl dressing a doll, and every little boy making a paper boat or cutting a stick ; and it is just here that educational systems of the past have begun their failure. They have ignored these activities as part of education, and regarded them as mischievous, or worse, as play.

I do not mean that we should take these happy activities and systematise and solemnise them. I mean quite the reverse ; that we should humanise and spiritualise education by bringing doll-dressing and boat-making into it ; in short by making play as important a branch of education as the dreary grind called work. There is in reality no difference save what grown-ups without a sense of proportion or of humour have read into them. Work and play should be inversions of one another, just as, according to Rabindranath, " Roots are branches in the ground, and branches roots in the air." The minds of the grown-ups have accumulated a mass of what the great educationist Herbert has called apperception masses, and these shape and colour their thought and action. But Shakespeare's plays, which we regard as matter for educational purposes, to the damage of the enjoyment of the play and the English of the Indian student, are only grown-up toy-boxes, not a bit more important at their own level than the mimic theatre or box of

## CULTURE AND TRAINING IN EDUCATION

animals of the child." They are probably less important, for while the adult pays his rupee and has "Krishna leila" or "Sakuntala" played to him, and merely reacts derivatively to outside influences, the child, with his or her toys, is engaged in the Art of Creation, with the faculties of imagination and design and expression carrying out the Divine cultural urge. In childhood we are all architects and sculptors, painters, decorators, dramatists and poets; and perhaps the most damning indictment of false education is the fact that, owing to the narrowing down of education to mere preparation either for earning a livelihood or having someone earn it for us, the artists and poets in any assembly of human beings could probably be counted on the fingers of both hands.

The problem for the educationist is not the construction of a curriculum of studies that the student must beat his brains against in order to shape them to the preconceived idea of the elders as to what brains should be shaped like. It is a very common and very dangerous mistake to think that the present, in any department of life, and in education especially, belongs to the present. The present belongs to the future, and it ought to be the business of the educationist who is not out-of-date or a faddist, to see to it that the substance of education is in a state of perpetual adjustment to the growing and varying needs of an evolving

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

humanity. Hence details must be very elastic, though general principles should be very clear. Let us here consider a couple of general principles.

Cultural study has two sides. There is first the knowledge side. This may sound a contradiction to the cultural urge, but it is not so. The plant cannot grow without nourishment, neither can the human plant either physically or mentally. The difference between knowledge that serves the purpose of mere pedantry and the knowledge which serves the purpose of culture is that one is retained in the system in junks, while the other is assimilated and transmuted into the substance of the human plant.

We include among the subjects that are capable of serving the purpose of culture, the history of human progress, and the nature of human environment, but we extend this progress and environment beyond the matter of dynastic wars, and of physical geography, and we take in the spiritual heredity and the spiritual environment of the child. That is to say, we take religion both historically and as a living contemporary fact, and patriotism, as an English poet puts it, not only in love of country but in love of *the* country, the very earth we tread on, the garment of the spiritual entity that we call Motherland.

The history of races as exemplified in such an epoch-making book as "Labour in Irish History," and

the expression of their distinctive qualities through religion, literature, art and social polity, are the direct outcome of the growing process in humanity; and we must bear in mind that the history of a people is that people's first concern and not the history of some other people.

We cannot, however, take the full cultural value out of the study of human expression unless we study also the circumstances that both limited and provoked that expression. Go carefully through a pauranic story, or a play, and score out all references and figures of speech that have to do with the climate and soil of India and their distinctive plant and animal products, and you will get a surprise with regard to the part that geography plays in human life. The Tower of London has played a prominent part in English History from the days of its builder, William the Conqueror, in the eleventh century, until the present day, but the flat lands between the Pennine Hills and the Welsh Mountains, called the Cheshire gate, have played a still greater part, for they showed the way westward to the Norman, and created that seven hundred year old nightmare of British politics, the Irish question.

But our interest in these matters will be cold and academic if we ourselves are not engaged in the process of making the same kind of history for succeeding

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

generations to study. This is the other side of cultural study. We shall make this history in our own expression of the cultural urge to activity in literature and the arts, in handicrafts and social affairs. But what is more important is that in the full exercise of the creative urge through these constituents of education, we shall not only make history but make ourselves. The way to the ultimate end of education, realisation of the Self, is through self-realisation, that is, through the putting into beautiful forms, in word or sound or substance, of the mood or thought of the moment and through them making clear to ourselves the nature and extent of that hidden side of our being which, at the student level, cannot be realised in introspection but in artistic expression. Bearing this in mind, it will be seen that this self-realisation has nothing to do with the little personal self that is the focal point of selfishness. True self-realisation carries with it the realisation of the self of others, and brings about an intensification and speeding up of all the processes of mind and body, with the result of the development of what a great modern educationist has called the sense of "awareness."

I have watched this development in certain Indian students with whom I have come specially in touch, and I mention the matter here as indicating the general principle of culture through artistic activity, and the

## CULTURE AND TRAINING IN EDUCATION

pliability of detail. A lamentation had been made at a Sumner School for Teachers as to the general absence of associated singing in Indian schools, and an effort was made to develop it in the college with which I was connected.

The first attempts of six hundred able-bodied and healthy-lunged students to sing a song that was taught to them were like the combined noises of a storm in a forest and waves breaking on a stony beach. Gradually something intelligible emerged from the chaos of sound, and when the founder visited the college, there was no mistaking the enthusiasm that went into the students' rendering of the song. The expression on the faces of some of the youngsters in their desire to make their thin pipe heard in the whirl of sound, was, to use the words of a visitor on the occasion, as if they were undergoing a major operation without anaesthetics. But there was more than enthusiasm : there was a touch of art, and a sense of co-operation and unity.

I tried to carry this further in my own group of students. We began the year with Indian songs each night before and after our family devotions. The first illuminating discovery was that three students would start off each at a different pitch, and sail on to the end, each quite accurate in his own key, and each in blissful ignorance of the fact that he was creating a horrible discord through being out of key with the

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

others. This was not due to the students' possessing an unmusical ear. It was simply due to absorption in the work of getting through the tune, without any reference to the others. Attention was tied down to a single personal purpose, and the sense of awareness was in abeyance. Art, however, could not leave the matter at that. After considerable practice, and persistent pulling up of culprits, it was found possible to get uniformity of pitch. But a further difficulty had to be overcome, that was a tendency to start all right as to the note, but to race to the end at different rates of speed. To overcome this additional phase of self-centredness I adopted the plan of a little ritual of marching for our evening devotions. When the pedestal for the bust of a great educationist was being erected, we marched singing from the back of our bungalow to the front garden and circled the pedestal until a certain position was reached. Sometimes our number was forty, and made a long line two deep. The first effect at a distance was of three separate choirs, the head, middle and tail of a serpent of sound. This necessitated an extension of the sense of awareness and of relationship with others not only in pitch at the beginning but in time all through. Practice here also wrought a change, and I shall not soon forget one moonlight night when we decided to serenade the then Principal in his quarters.

## CULTURE AND TRAINING IN EDUCATION

and invite his family to join us in our evening prayer and song. When my family sang its way back across the playground almost like one voice, I felt that each member of the group had entered into a larger consciousness, and had gone a good step towards the attainment of that high degree of culture expressed by Shelley in the lines,

Man, one immortal soul of many a soul,  
Whose nature is its own divine control,  
Where all things flow to all as rivers to the sea.

The same end can be attained through the drama, not, however, in the type of drama so common in South India, whose subject-matter is so well-known that people can afford to fall asleep and so await the passing of the play until the small hours of the morning. The drama which will fulfil the cultural purpose that I am speaking of is that which will challenge the attention of the hearers, call for complete co-operation among the actors, and so form a large unit of consciousness that will not tolerate the constant interruptions and goings to and fro of the Indian Theatre.

We must remember, however, that even in music and the drama, we shall only get the best cultural results if we keep in view that it is cultural results we want. We may hide our ulterior motive from the students, but we must always have our eye on an end beyond the last note of the song or the last curtain of

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

the drama. It is not enough, in the case of a song, that memory has proved true, and that pitch and time are accurate. There must be an effort in the direction of refinement and beauty, and this effort will bring out a sensitiveness that will protest against vulgarity and ugliness and seek to eliminate them from both art and life. A year's attention to making students cultivate a pure tone in singing would result in the abolition of the harshness and monotony that are the chief characteristics of Indian singing to-day. Instead of having this cultural aim in the teaching of singing, we have men with the voices of crows making pupils simply imitate them, and the divine art of music is pulled down from its ancient place as one of the chief of the arts to a mere matter of memorising and reproducing traditional tunes.

I have already referred to the cultural value of geographical study on the knowledge side. I revert to it here because of its cultural value also on the expression side. I am not, of course, referring to the obsolete memorising of chief towns and their exports or the like, which had as much relation to real geographical study as song-memorisation has to musical culture. I refer to the modern method of studying the earth as the home of humanity, and getting to know all those miraculous processes of climate, soil and vegetation that form the wonder and the beauty

## CULTURE AND TRAINING IN EDUCATION

of nature. Such study can only be properly pursued by observation, correspondence, record, deduction, and the calling into play of accuracy, neatness, and system. There is something akin to the Divine cultural process in reducing a mass of statistics to a simple and eloquent graph or a neatly coloured map, and watching some vital truth take shape under one's hand. It is chaos producing cosmos in miniature.

But, someone may remark, this thing that you call culture is hopelessly mixed up with the other part of your subject which you have not yet touched, that is, training. Of course it is—or ought to be. That is just the conclusion toward which I am moving. Departmentalism, water-tight compartments, can have no place in an educational system that is worthy the name of education. We need an all-round, balanced development, from which training in a special direction may spring with safety. The hungry victims of educational experiments based on an incomplete view of the nature of the student, have had to be satisfied with little pecks of culture and little pecks of training. What is now wanted is a good square meal every day of cultured training and of trained culture; by which I mean that there should be nothing in school study that cannot be related with life, and there should be nothing in school training that is not backed by and directed towards culture.

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

In this give-and-take we shall do several things besides improving education. One of these things will be the restoring of labour to its proper place, and the taking of the pride out of us of the parasitic classes who eat the food, wear the clothing, and live in the homes provided for us by the farmer and the workman whom we so foolishly look down upon. In Southern India we are specially brought face to face with this quaint attitude of the classes that regard themselves as superior, to their so-called inferiors. I have seen a student too proud to remove his bed. He had to "call a menial." But the menial was earning an honest month's pay, while the superior student was being educated and fed by the charity of others. By and by, however, we shall wear down this mediceval attitude, and we shall give to the noble, and the only real wealth-creating occupation, agriculture, young men, aye and young women, who will bring wide and deep knowledge, and sensible training, to the work of production from the soil, to the great joy of the soil itself, and the great comfort and happiness of the people of India.

This is not, as some may be quietly thinking, a modern notion subtly aiming at pulling down the divinely appointed "higher classes" by artificially elevating the "lower classes." On the contrary, it is an ancient Indian idea. Listen to a song of Kam-

## CULTURE AND TRAINING IN EDUCATION

bhar, the Tamil poet-laureate of the Chola dynasty in the eighth century.

The hand that holds the spear of power  
is supported by the hand that holds the plough.

The hand that wears jewels in luxury and ease  
is supported by the hand that holds the plough.

The hand of him whose karma it is to toil against  
poverty

is supported by the hand that holds the plough.

The hand that makes offerings to the Devas  
is supported by the hand that holds the plough.

The hands of the Devas that control the world  
are supported by the hand that holds the plough.

There is a motto for a National College of Agriculture !

The practical work awaiting the educationist is the making provision for the inclusion in an elementary form from the very earliest stages of student-life, of all possibilities of future specialisation, so that such specialisation as may be necessary will not be, as it often is, a dislocated phase of the student's career, but a natural extension of some special element in his and her early study in which culture and training have combined to give to the student and the teacher a physical and mental instrument of greater efficiency and happiness than would otherwise have been the case.

## CHRISTIANITY AND INDIAN EDUCATION

The Christian Colleges are definitely and with conviction trying by every lawful and fair means in their power to hasten the day when India from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin shall become a Christian land.

This is the statement of the relationship of Christian missions to Indian education, made by the Principal of one of the largest Missionary Colleges in India. It is the obvious and intelligible outcome of the basic tenet that he sets down later in his discourse in answer to "that most solemn of all questions, what does a Christian College hold to be the spiritual destiny of the sincere follower of another faith?"—

There is only one God...There is only one atonement by which sinful man has ever or can ever find that Holy Father of us all, and that is by the boundless Grace of the Eternal God Who has revealed Himself to men, incarnate in time in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Nor is there nor can there be salvation by any other.

This boundless 'Grace of the Eternal God' appears, in the view of the Principal, to be all-sufficing. 'No religion,' he says, 'can save men. It can only be God Himself.' If these words mean anything they mean that all the great religions are on an equal foot-

## CHRISTIANITY AND INDIAN EDUCATION

ing of ineffectiveness, including Christianity, and make spiritual realisation the one great aim of life. In this respect the Christian aim of union with God, the Hindu moksha, and the Buddhist nirvana, since they all stand for the union with and absorption of the personality into Divinity, would stand as equals. But this is not so, else there would be no point in pushing the Christian religion "from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin." There must, therefore, be some subterranean connection between this apparently inclusive statement and the propagandism of the Christian religion in which the maker of it is engaged. We think the missing premiss is, that God is revealed only in the Christian religion. If so, there is a vital connection between man's salvation and Christianity which is in sharp contrariety with the statement that "no religion can save men."

In the presentation of the main thesis, of which the foregoing extract forms the kernel, our author points out what he regards as the most marked point of contrast between Christianity and other religions—its claim to have a message for all mankind, and refers to Gautama the Buddha as having "emptied life of all its richest meaning." We confess we can hardly imagine the state of mind out of which so entirely fallacious a view of Buddhism can come forth. It leaves the impression that this process is a feature

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

which marks the inferiority of Buddhism to Christianity. But if the trend of the teaching of the Buddha is reprehensible because it leads its devotees away from earth life, what are we to say of the religion whose founder declared that no one was fit to follow him who was not prepared to play deserter to his home, his family, his dependents, his country ? It was Jesus Christ who taught this !

So also in a reference to Hinduism, we are given the impression of a person of a purposely kindly disposition, most anxious to find out the great dynamic doctrines of that religion, but deterred by "the apparent ungoverned riot of speculation which confronts him at every turn." This impression is just as false as the impression on a Hindu would be if, wishing to get at the central truths of Christianity, he was set down before the writings of the Fathers and the whole mass of ungoverned and self-contradictory speculations of scholiasts and schismatists ; and when he had grasped the great doctrine of the Trinity, was faced with our author's own repudiation in the article before us of "the popular tritheism which has crept and still creeps into much of our devotional and even some of our theological forms of expression." When our enquiring Hindu was also impressed with our author's very careful declaration that in anything he said, he was speaking for no one but himself, we

## CHRISTIANITY AND INDIAN EDUCATION

submit that there would be some ground for the Hindu's taking away the idea that Christianity was an intellectual anarchy.

It is this kind of incomplete thinking, which indeed is not thinking from any rational principle but the mere juxtaposing of phrases, that does so much harm to the true progress of Christian teaching both in India and in the Christian countries. There is a vast amount of illumination to be obtained from the free exchange of spiritual truth, but the method of bringing everything to the test of set formulæ and fixed half-truths instead of fundamentals, is barrier-building, not bridge-building. One such example will serve as a conclusion.

The salvation which the Christian offers, our author tells us, "is no nirvana, no loss of personal identity in the Great Ocean of Being. It is the fully realised and conscious fellowship of the human being with God—knowing as we are known, seeing Him as He is." Here we have the customary method of putting one thing against another, with the implicit assumption of the final truth and superiority of the Christian presentation. Yet these echoes of scriptural texts and hymn-book lines will not bear a moment's examination in the light of Christian fundamentals. If God is, as Christianity declares Him to be, all-knowing, and so knows us absolutely, how can we know Him as He

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

knows us, unless our organ of knowledge is equal to His, and therefore beyond the limits of the personal brain ? If God is all-present, how can we see Him as He is, unless our sight is stretched to infinity, and so beyond the limits of the personal eye ? And what is the personal identity that is not to be lost : the stammering sensuousness of youth ? the fixed notions of age ? Straight answers to these questions make nonsense of such statements, and show how needful it is for someone to arise within the Christian fold and cry aloud the ancient warning that the letter killeth, and that only the Spirit maketh alive.

## ON INSPIRATION IN LITERATURE

Ordinarily the two major divisions of the totality of things, which are present in the mind, are the self and the non-self; myself—and all the rest from my bosom friend to the farthest of the fixed stars. And as the child regards the universe outside its mouth as so much food, so I look upon all things that are not I as the apparatus on which I shall exert my strength and influence.

But some day I discover myself looking at myself and smiling, and repeating the saying of the divine charioteer, Sri Krishna, to Prince Arjuna between the armies on the field of Kuru, "The self, deluded by the sense of separateness, saith, 'I am the Doer.' " And behold! the fiery impulse with which I—I—I was going to unhorse a thousand wrongs is seen to be but the reaction which I have made to the impact and pressure of the universe. Take away those wrongs, and my lance had never come from its armoury; take away the foe, and the victor will never claim his laurel.

And yet when the call came to go forth to slay dragons, I was up at the first blast of the trumpet, but my companion turned over on his other side and asked to be left in peace.

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

Here we come upon the central mystery of human personality. To all there is the same totality of things external, the only difference being that I am part of your universe, and you are part of mine. But to no two persons does that universe mean the same thing, and in no two persons does it elicit the same response. We respond as we are capable of responding, and that capability depends, not merely on the circumstances of our lives, but primarily and mainly on the tone, colour, intensity, whatever you may term it, of a Self within the self.

In all mankind there exists this fundamental Self, but not in all is it recognised ; and as recognition and understanding mean discretion and power and facility—in science, in affairs, in the arts—I am moved to address these words to all those whose desire is for the elevation of humanity, to the end that they refuse not, but rather seek, the help of all to whom it has been given to express themselves in song, in colour, in form, in motion, in any and every kind of art.

For in the arts, side by side with religion, there is conscious recognition of the inner Self, and a strong and stable bridge over which the ideal world may march and conquer and build in its own image the future world of actuality. "Blessed are the peacemakers"—not those who merely are at peace. Blessed are the makers of beauty, the singers of impossible:

## ON INSPIRATION IN LITERATURE

paradises, the moulders and the wielders of beautiful bodies and shapely limbs, for they are in very truth the children of God, inheritors and unfolders of the eternal harmony and beauty that speaks to them by inspiration from the inner self, as it spoke at sundry times and in divers manners to the prophets and seers of old, and speaks even in the lines which appear at the end of this essay.

In mentioning the word inspiration and my own lines in the same breath, it will, I hope, be understood that I am innocent of any intention to suggest that my use of the word is in the same degree as it would be if I spoke of the "inspired lines" of Shelley at the end of "Hellas." Nevertheless, in the cause of all who at any time have in the arts endeavoured to find a way to the expression of that which moved dimly within the mind, I make bold to say that their inspiration, and my inspiration, and Shelley's inspiration, are *one* inspiration. Wherein the manifestations of that inspiration differed in kind, one being static, as in sculpture, one fluidic as in music, they differed by virtue of circumstances on the horizontal plane of things, time, place, family, sex, physique, and the like. Wherein they differed in intensity, in power to evoke a response in other minds, they differed by virtue of qualities beyond the circumstantial, qualities inherent in the Inner Self, and referable to spiritual history, "whe-

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

ther in the body or out of the body I cannot tell.'

I do not know how it is with other writers of verse, but my own dealings with my Inner Self, while philosophically quite explicable, are somewhat bewildering to the executive self. I have stared at a sheet of paper for two hours, and it was as blank at the end as at the beginning. In despair I have risen and taken refuge in an abandon of nonchalance, and lo ! two score lines came with a rush. Sometimes it has been the other way round, and sometimes quite different. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and when it listeth and how ; and at times the instrument matters much, and at times not at all.

One evening, when enjoying a quiet few minutes in the peace of my home, I suddenly saw, "in my mind's eye," a great angel that had wandered into a flat world. He could not escape because his feet had become entangled in the ground and struggle only made his bondage worse. Then he put his hands together and prayed, and up he went, and pulled up with him a portion of the flat world, which became a mountain. I saw that I had before me not merely a myth of the making of the mountains, such as a neolithic poet might have made for his tribe, but also a symbolic presentation of the meaning and efficacy of aspiration. I made a note of the subject, and it passed out of my conscious mind.

## ON INSPIRATION IN LITERATURE

Four years afterwards I was very busily engaged in the compilation of a school text-book, and had occasion to read at the Dublin National Museum. One night I became very tired mentally before my time for leaving the library. I ceased work—the subject was geology—leaned back in my chair, and made a conscious effort to clear my mind of all thoughts, a practice which enables me to secure in ten minutes more mental refreshment than hours of sleep. Suddenly I found myself wide awake in some interior region, and there was the angel once again lifting his mountain. With the vision, if I may so call it, came also the apprehension of words, and I immediately jotted down in shorthand on a scrap of paper the lines printed below.

The connection between geology and the poem is clear. It may explain the revival of the memory. But something more is needed to explain the writing of lines which do not sound tired, by a person in the last stages of brain fag ; and something still more to account for the fact that the idea of the poem, which I had never seen in prose or verse previously, I found afterwards to be a modified reproduction of a legendary incident in the life of St. Mungo. It is said that when he wished to address an audience in the street or on the roads, if an eminence suitable for a pulpit was not at hand, he had only to assume the attitude of

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

aspiration, and the ground rose under his feet.

From incidents such as this—and I feel free to speak of it because I have never come to think of it as “something of my own”—one begins to apprehend that the inspiration of the artist and the inspiration of the prophet and seer are differentiated only in their accidents, not in their essence. To the one his art may be, should be, his religion, his path to the well of living water in his own heart, as well as his voice to call all men everywhere to repentance. To the other his religion should be as the first of the arts : in time, the first effort of the evolving human consciousness to body forth in myth the dimly apprehended inner world ; in significance, the most intimate apprehension and the fullest utterance of the ineffable mystery.

## HOW THE MOUNTAINS CAME TO BE\*

### A Myth for Ancient Children

A Bird once came and said to me :  
“ Hear how the Mountains came to be....  
An Angel from his heavenly sphere  
Fell to the earth. A chilly fear  
Shot through his wings from tip to tip,  
For there was neither wave nor ship,  
Mountain nor stream, nor maid nor man,  
Far as the Angel’s eye could scan,  
Nor soothing shade, nor flower nor tree,  
Before the Mountains came to be.  
He stretched his wings to fly away,  
But round his feet the oozy clay  
Gripped fast and held him to the ground.  
He stretched and strove until a sound  
Went through him, from he knew not where,  
And said : ‘ The only way is prayer.’  
He dropped his wings and raised his eyes,  
And sent his soul into the skies.  
He prayed and prayed, and as he prayed  
A wind among his plumage played  
And bore him upward toward his sphere.  
Around his feet from far and near  
There came a sound that seemed to say :  
‘ Pray on ! pray on ! we, too, would pray ;  
\*From “Etain the Beloved” and other poems (Maunsel, Dublin).

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

'Thy prayer has touched the sleeping Powers !  
Pray on ! thy prayer shall yet be ours.  
We, too, have wings that pine for flight,  
We, too, have eyes that long for light !'  
Upward he moved, and still his eyes  
Were fastened on the distant skies,  
And as he rose toward heaven dim  
He drew the earth up after him.  
About his feet the oozy clay  
Gripped fast, but could not stop or stay  
His course, till on the skyey stair  
He paused beyond the need for prayer,  
While from the air beneath, around  
There rose a tumult of glad sound.  
The Angel turned the sound to seek,  
But, lo ! his foot was on a peak  
That fell away to where the world  
Lay like a painted flag unfurled  
And shaken out from sea to sea,—  
And thus the Mountains came to be."  
...So said the Bird, and what the masque  
Of meaning hid I meant to ask,  
But off he flew before I knew,  
And yet—I think the tale is true  
If one could only hear aright,  
Or see with something more than sight.

## PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

In a lecture in Dublin some time ago on 'The Bearings of Psychical Research' the Rev. D. Mullan, M.A., declared his personal conviction as to the reality of certain supernormal phenomena ; and attributed the widely lamented failure of religions throughout the world to the ignoring or contemning of such phenomena by the Churches. He further prophesied that the questions involved in psychical research, being of supreme importance to humanity, would shortly dominate the religious thought of the world.

It is a notable sign of the times that such an utterance should come from a clergyman who is also a member of the Society for Psychical Research, and especially from one who has spoken and written much on that phase of religious experience—the personal and subjective—which is furthest removed from the phenomenal. It marks the responsibility that is being increasingly felt, at any rate in Christian circles, by the pioneer minds in religion and science to have an eye to the tendencies of things, in order that, by intelligently apprehending the future, they may make the necessary adjustments in their own beliefs as they

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

go along, and not wait for a revolution ; in order, also that the viewing of their studies and experiments from various angles may conduce to real research, not mere accumulation, and minimize the natural danger of riding to death the subliminal and telepathic hypotheses which obsess the minds of the psychical researcher, or any other hypothesis.

This process of observation and adjustment is specially to be recommended to the various religious bodies which relegate to themselves the control of thought and practice touching the life that now is in its relationship to the assumed life that is to come. Some of us are not too young to remember the shakings of Christendom that followed the promulgation of the theory of evolution, as the outcome of the researches of Darwin and Wallace. To-day we live amongst the *debris* of that shaking, which has manifested itself in religious doubt, and in consequent deprivation of the motive power that comes from faith in a deeper life than the eye can see and the hands handle. For that deprivation the Churches are mainly responsible, because their faith was not faith, but credulity, and because in the face of question they took refuge in subtlety and obscurantism, and ignored or refused to utilise the "evidence of things not seen" which has been gathering for centuries.

But a change set in. It became slowly apparent

## PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

that a law of the universe was not necessarily the special possession of rationalist writers. The materialistic hypothesis—which regarded itself as parent and offspring of the theory of evolution—had to submit to its own evolutionary law. Physical science passed on, and became metaphysical—the last horror of the concrete mind. Its ultimate atoms were blown to what in Ireland are called “smithereens.” There is not a molecular shot left in its locker.

And now the pendulum begins to swing back towards the religious side, but with a difference. The law of evolution has been taken over as a working principle in advanced religious thought ; it has introduced the possibility of elasticity and adaptability that has given great hope for the future. But there is a danger that the vast dead-weight of ignorance and prejudice and laziness, that is as evident on the religious side of things as on any other, may prevent the orderly evolution of religious thought, and may occasion disruption and violence.

A starting-point toward an orderly readjustment of religious thought will be found in a consideration of some probable influences of the acceptance of telepathy as a demonstrated fact. The evidence that has been gathered by the Society for Psychical Research and by observers outside the Society, establishes beyond scientific doubt the fact that, given a person capable of

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

sustained visualization, and another capable of sustained passivity of mind, it is possible for the former to transmit to the latter definite thought-images and ideas over long distances, not absolutely exactly, but with a percentage of similarity which, taken with the deliberate act of simultaneous transmission and reception, places the matter outside the probability of coincidence.

But, in addition to this direct, conscious transmission of thought, it has become evident also that there is an indirect and uncontrolled telepathy playing a much larger part in human affairs than is generally supposed. We all, in our times of active thought, appear to be scattering about us positive, outgoing influences. It is a reasonable assumption that these influences may make themselves felt in minds that have some affinity with the nature of the influence, and are at the same time in a receptive state. Most people have had at various times experiences that are corroborative of this assumption. Such experiences occur usually when a small section of the mind is engaged in some occupation that requires little concentration. It has also been observed in the records of crime that many persons who have been guilty of criminal acts have been unable to give any reason why they did so, and not a few give evidence of the action of suggestion from some source outside their own conscious mind.

Here we have an important point in relation to the

present religious thought on the subject of sin. It is commonly assumed, as a basis for the responsibility of the human unit in regard to sin, first (which is outside our subject), that there is an absolute standard of right and wrong ; second (which intimately concerns our subject), that in respect of any act, be it virtuous or vicious, the whole consciousness of the individual is engaged, and is perfectly free and without interference. But when we grasp the significance of the continuous unconscious interchange between human minds, we shall see that the religious thought of the future—and, indeed, the legal thought, if there is such a thing—will have to make considerable modifications in its attitude towards the sinner. The apportionment of guilt will not then be the simple thing it is to-day. It will be a much profounder and subtler matter. It will not necessarily imply the total denial of individual responsibility, but it will lift it from the single act and person, and will spread it over a wide circle of "accessories before the fact." For, clearly, once we accept the truth of unconscious suggestion, it would be an act of injustice to condemn alone a single human unit, who may be three-fourths himself and one-fourth a reflection of others. We shall have to consider the problem of so ordering the life of the world that the interplay of unconscious thought will be pure and upward on the positive side ; and that, on the passive

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

side, we shall evolve an order of minds which, through innate purity, will as naturally react to pure unconscious suggestion as they will naturally *not* react to evil suggestion. From this point of view, therefore, it is probable that the evolution of psychical science will compel the religious bodies to undertake, in the name of true religion, a social reconstruction which will have the light of the soul and the warmth of the heart, and serve the purpose of a developing humanity much more efficiently than any purely mechanical economic system.

But the fact of telepathy has not merely a dogmatic significance ; it has also an important historical bearing on religious thought. It has been the boast of scientific rationalism that it has killed religious superstition, including the notion of scriptural inspiration. But the long and close study of thought-transference has made it no longer possible to congratulate an ancient prophet on the purity and truth of his message in one breath, and in the next to call him a liar or a fool for beginning his utterance with the presumption, "Thus saith the Lord." We now know that, not merely are we bombarded unconsciously by stray thoughts from other minds, but that it is possible so to discipline the conscious mind that it may become a resonator to thought, even to long series of precise impressions of words, from beyond the threshold of consciousness.

## PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

I could place my hand on a quantity of inspired writing, equal in bulk and significance to any of the major prophets, which sounded without premeditation through the mind of one who belongs to the order of Illuminati, possessed itself of a clearly defined region of consciousness and motor power, and which ceased with the same extraneous self-will as it began. Whether such inspiration comes from the subliminal self of the inspired one, or from the subliminal self of some other individual incarnate, discarnate, or celestial, is a question that may be left to the future. What is certain is that inspiration—not in the sense of the artist's exaltation, but in the plain prophetic sense of an intrusion from outside the circle of active consciousness—is a fact, not a superstition.

In this respect, therefore, psychical research is the one possible way to justification of the claims to inspiration in the Christian Scriptures. But since the scientific establishment of inspiration comes by way of experiences outside the Canon of Scripture, it follows that the claim to exclusive inspiration, either as to time or place, is no longer tenable.

So, also, with regard to prayer, the establishment of telepathy offers a scientific explanation for the numerous instances of answered prayer which an ill-informed materialism has scouted as imagination or coincidence, and an equally ill-informed religious sentimentalism

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

has attributed to special and arbitrary interpositions of the Power that is the totality of all powers. The truth, as is its custom, lies somewhere between the extremes. We are conscious in our moments of insight of a great general movement through all things, working out some vast plan which eludes us, and searching through the minutiae of human faculty for the line of least resistance. But reason asks for a more acceptable hypothesis than Divine interposition in the details of life ; and psychical research demonstrates the possibility of forces being set in motion through the natural agency of concentrated thought, with or without the collusion of other minds here or elsewhere, and the induction of a desired action through telepathic suggestion.

Let us turn now to that great body of phenomena concerning the activity of consciousness outside the limits of time and space as we know them, and hence beyond the power of death. It is probably here that psychical research will exercise the profoundest influence, since its findings will touch the great central dogma of the Resurrection. To-day it is passionately declared throughout Christendom that the elimination of the truth of the physical Resurrection of Jesus would wipe out the whole Christian system. Yet, when materialistic rationalism has asked the quite-relevant question, "What evidence, direct or analogous,

## PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

“can you give for a teaching which is so utterly opposed to common experience ?” the interpreters of religious thought have taken refuge in verbal juggling and in cruel suggestions as to the morality and honesty of the questioners.

The stress laid on the *bodily* resurrection as a proof of the victory of life over death is a strange indication of the materialistic method of thinking into which Christianity early fell, and is an evidence as to how little it learned from the thought and experience of the pre-Christian world. The old Greek philosophers had learned that the act of consciousness is not, as such, dependent on the body. The ascetics of the East had ages past achieved the mastery of the flesh as an instrument. Paul himself was not unfamiliar with the operation of consciousness apart from its vehicles. But the great mass of religious people have become so dominated by the shapes and sizes of things, rather than by their essences, that the limitations of the body have been transferred to the soul, and even to God himself ; so that between scientific materialism and religious materialism there is no difference observable save in postulates and prejudices.

Now, with regard to this matter, Psychical Research is on the eve of an affirmative answer to the ancient question, “ If a man die, shall he live again ? ” Or rather, Psychical Research has demonstrated to a

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

degree demanded by no other question, but conceded because of its supreme importance, that when a man dies he has not ceased to live. To any one who has followed the vast literature that records innumerable researches into all phases of supernormal activity this statement will not appear to be beyond the truth ; and I know of many besides myself to whom the survival of death is no mere second-hand belief, but a matter of certain knowledge.

How, then, will this knowledge, when widely possessed by leaders of religious thought, affect the doctrine of the Resurrection ? It will, in the first place, scientifically confirm the truth that "death is swallowed up in victory" ; in the second place, it will, by demonstrating the phenomenon of materialization, give a natural rather than a supernatural explanation of the appearance of Jesus after His crucifixion. The gradual building up of the physical body by the activity of the brain centres in association with properties in food and air is not a whit less marvellous than the building up of a transient body by a discarnate ego in association with properties provided by a number of persons assembled together. The great re-adjustment of religious thought, however, in respect of the resurrection will be this : not that the resurrection of Jesus for the first time made possible the survival of death, but that he simply demonstrated the natural fact in the universe:

## PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

that the human consciousness is not subject to death.

We have to inquire, further, as to the influence of Psychical Research on the teaching of two fixed states of eternal bliss and torture called Heaven and Hell. It is obvious that in the nature of things no absolute proof of eternal existence can be forthcoming, since anything short of eternity could not prove eternity. But what Psychical Research does show is that consciousness is not destroyed in death, and that, whatever changes may take place in it during the lapse of what we call time, a personal identity remains for some period beyond the change called death, and can, in suitable conditions not yet fully understood, give signals of its identity.

Now, if the findings of Psychical Research with regard to *post-mortem* existence will modify the doctrine of Heaven and Hell, they will certainly continue that modification into the institution of the priesthood, which depends for its existence on the teaching of an eternal state to which the priesthood possesses the key. To preserve that right-of-way the priesthoods have built up a ritual and creed, whose administration they claim to themselves, whereby humanity may pass through death into temporary purgation or eternal happiness. The act of faith has thus become of supreme importance. The act of life in the world has become of importance only in so far

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

as it supports the act of faith. As a consequence, we have the separation of the Churches from drastic and continuous interference with what is called "secular" life. Their efforts in social reform are spasmodic, unrelated, and secondary to conformity with religious faith and practice. Between life and the life to come the priesthoods stand, knowing as little of the one as of the other, but insistent in preventing any suspicion that life, whether in the flesh or out of the flesh, is *one* life, and that the conditions of *life hereafter* are dependent upon *life now*, and not upon assent to any creed, except to the extent that that creed has affected the life.

Here, as in other matters, the influence of Psychical Research will result in a modification of extremes. The establishment of a natural continuation of life beyond death having no necessary and final connexion with religious organization will lead to an abandonment of the exclusive claims of the priesthoods, but it will not necessarily result in the abolition of the priestly office. In the religious, as in other phases of human activity, the function of the mediator would appear to be a necessary condition. Between the general mass of humanity who, for example, use the electric trams, and the great reservoir of potential electric power, there is the hierarchy of inventors and discoverers, with their executive of engineers. When we reach the

## PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

point at which every individual will make and direct his own electric power, the hierarchy and executive may become objects of mere historical interest. But that time is not yet, neither is the time yet when humanity as a whole will possess direct knowledge of the world of spirit. Between the diverse life of the individual in the flesh and the realm in which he will function after he discards this temporary instrument of the body there must be an order of *knowers*: men and women whose office it will be to manifest to the world the truth of the spirit life, and to search for the conditions of that life so that they may teach mankind how best to prepare to enter upon it. The religious thought of the future, illuminated and intensified by psychical research, will demand that they who desire to stand as exponents of the spiritual life will know at least as much about it as the professed electrician must know about electricity. To day it is unfortunately not so: they who stand as preachers of the life after death know nothing of the *fact*; but the future will change all that. We shall probably see a modified return to the old pagan way of preserving from worldly care those who have the spiritual gifts whose nature the Christian apostle counselled, together with the organization of a priesthood of exposition based on knowledge and on character, and as much of intellect as may serve goodness and purity, but not dominate it.

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

In conclusion, I would anticipate the suggestion that the elimination of mystery from religion would rob it of much of its power to influence humanity, by pointing out that the phenomena which are the subject of Psychical Research touch only a small part of cosmic activity. To the mystic all discovery among the phenomena of life is only a rearrangement of factors in a sum whose answer is unity. To the non-mystic, the concrete mind, the pushing of boundaries into the unknown is apt to bring temporary bewilderment. But the seekers after truth must go on in the assurance that the mystery of ignorance will give place to the deeper and nobler mystery of truth. The breaking of the tyranny of what is falsely called the supernatural will lead to the elevation of the natural. Instead of fear and evasion of punishment, or search for reward, there will be substituted a purer ethic, which will take us far on the way to the dreamed-of time when religion, will touch all life truly, and when all life will be seen to be truly religious.

## RELIGIOUS UNITY.

The considerations set out in the preceding essay, if grasped clearly and fully, would go a long way towards the bringing about of religious unity, especially among the various sects of Christianity. But the way to such unity is already open through the straight gate and narrow way of reason ; or, rather, of that type of reasoning which fearlessly accepts certain premisses that are labelled 'abstract,' and proceeds to the end of thought however it may approach the dreaded verge of 'metaphysics.'

Let us take such a premiss: that life is rooted in a unity, and from that unity grows outward into variety. Physical science has reached such a unity of substance; psychological science has reached such a unity of consciousness. Our premiss is well and truly grounded.

From this point of view we see all manifested diversity as the outward and interdependent expression of an inner unity; and included in the process of evolution from the assumed unity to diversity are the great systematisations of thought and feeling which have become the religions of humanity. We can therefore agree with Rationalism that the religions are human searches after truth, but we have also to main-

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

tain that the results are not merely casual expressions of changes in matter, but are formulations, in terms of time and location, of truth that is pressing through a vehicle of expression that is on a lower level than the truth itself, just as the opinion of a particular moment is, even in its most undeliberate form, a limited expression from our own larger self of experience and character. At the same time we can agree with the most orthodox religionist when he claims that his religion has been inspired from levels so far above the common thought and life of humanity that they may be called super-human; but we also keep sight of the psychological fact that any impact upon the formulative mind from its own background, or from another mind, can only be expressed in accordance with the faculty and temperament of the expressor.

We may therefore hold all religions to be in essence true and complete, but in expression subject to the limitations of their age and place. By virtue of its basis in the Truth that is behind all truths, each religion is the proper one for the race through which it came: succeeding centuries may, nay, must modify its details in accordance with the growth of knowledge and experience, but its characteristic note will remain. On the other hand, by reason of its racial and geographical boundaries, no creed can impose itself upon another race without doing grave injury to both. The

## RELIGIOUS UNITY

chief reason, indeed, why the "Christian nations" have for four years been engaged in wielding the hammer of Scandinavian Thor instead of following the command of the Judean Master Jesus to return good for evil, is that they are cut off by race and place from attaining full affinity with the purely oriental character of the Christianity of Jesus Christ. The Sermon on the Mount is repudiated, not because it or its repudiation is false in essence, but simply because its gentle unselfishness and Eastern genius will not square with the rapacious individualism and aggressiveness that mark the present stage of European evolution.

The way out of such anomalies runs through an acceptance of the view that each religion is the true religion is for the race through which its first revelation came ; in saying which we are not saying that one religion as good as another. Quite the reverse : we are saying that one religion is *much better* than another for its natural devotees.

There is, however, a level of attainment from which the white light of spiritual truth may be clearly seen through its prismatic sections, as the deep eye of Shelley saw "the white radiance of Eternity" through Life's "dome of many-coloured glass." Shri Ramakrishna may adopt the dress and ceremonial of various creeds in order to find the one spiritual essence through all. Mrs. Besant may voluntarily adopt Hinduism as

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

the external form of religion that satisfies a mind that Christianity failed to satisfy; but, speaking generally, the adherents of the view of the spiritual unity of the creeds will be found willing to remain, if permitted by the Churches, members of the religious communities in which they were born, not, however, as blind echoes of the letter, but as illuminated practitioners of the spirit ; at the same time exercising a wise tolerance towards other creeds, and receiving thankfully from them much help in fully understanding the spiritual content of their own creed.

There are, however, a couple of points at which we may collide, not, indeed, with the essential truths of a creed, but with certain exclusive claims made by the exponents of the creeds. When such an exponent says : " In my Religion you can find all spiritual truth," we may say: " That is so, though the expression of it may put a barrier between the truth and a mind to which the expression is unsuited, and so your Religion cannot be universally obligatory;" but when the Religionist says: " Only in my Religion can truth be found," we are moved to reply: " Not so; for no part can embrace the whole and exclude other parts." We accept the truth contained in the phrase of the Christ: " I am the way...no man cometh unto the Father but by Me," but we decline to limit " the way" to one sect's interpretation of an obvious figure of speech: we hold that the

## RELIGIOUS UNITY

"narrow way," the Yoga that leads to unity with the Divine, is not through a creed but through a universal principle of Christhood that is within the ultimate attainment of all.

The other colliding point is where any priesthood claims exclusive control over those powers beyond the ordinary senses which are called supernatural: we have to deny the right of any body, sacerdotal or otherwise, to put under credal domination what are either true or untrue as matters of fact, not according to a previously formulated dogma. Spiritual vision, healing power, and other higher faculties of humanity are, from the point of view of an ultimate unity, possible of attainment by all, within or without a creed, who fulfil certain well known conditions which have been tested for untold centuries; and it is only when the priesthood have themselves direct and full knowledge of such powers, and the proper conditions for their development and control, that they will speak with the authority that compels.

## THE SOUL: EVOLUTION.

Let us consider the matter of the Soul in the light of the acceptance of a unity behind diversity.

In its widest sense, the realm of the Soul is all that region that lies between the postulated unity and the diversity between the body and that which animates the body, and which we may call spirit. This realm of the soul is analogous to the region between an act and the totality of forces that culminated in the act. Between the total (which is the analogue of the Spirit) and the act (which is the analogue of the person or body) there is an intermediary body of experiences that are in affinity with the act, to which the act will add a new experience. This is the analogue of the Soul.

Between the physical body and the Soul we need some kind of interpreter between sensation and its realisation in consciousness; but this is not the Soul, it is one of its instruments. So also is the still subtler instrument for the focussing and interpretation of the emotional activity of humanity. When one says: "I feel," one is putting a gulf between the Soul and one of its functions, between the "I" and a process that is not the "I". Feelings fluctuate, desires wax and wane, but I, who know this, remain. And when one says:

## THE SOUL EVOLUTION

"I think" one is affirming the Thinker as distinct from thinking and from thought. We are perpetually "thinking," and in normal activity the thought is identified with the Thinker: it manifests the invisible One. This is so where thought is genuine; but much that passes for thought is only echo from memorised prejudice, or reflection from flying thought stuff "in the air," or waves in the waters of the mind after the passing of some breeze of thought. Descartes took the power of thought to be the sign of individual existence: "I think, therefore I am." But a still surer sign of individual existence is the power *to cease thinking*. Tell your pack-mule of thought to fling its burden off its back and stand still, and in less than five minutes you will have discovered either in its refusal to obey you, or in your power to make it do so, that you are not your mule. A few such efforts, and you will know that you are no more your mental instrument or your brain than you are your emotional instrument or the lips that sip the wine of pleasure. Every atom of the brain has disappeared in seven years: every attitude of thought to life may also have changed; but the "I" remains.

The experiences of daily life may appear to influence only a circumscribed area of the individual consciousness, but, in fact, such influence is much wider. It is a recognised law in education that the effect of

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

attention on the attainment of any particular faculty will be seen in other phases of the student's life. Neatness and precision in writing will not remain confined to pen and paper. In the same way a new experience in consciousness will show itself not only on other parts of the surface of the consciousness, but also in deeper regions. A vivid event may revolutionise the whole attitude to life. In this way the "middle distance" of life is modified: thought is revised, and the automatic-reaction to further impact from the outer world is changed to some extent.

The law of Evolution is defined as "the doctrine that higher forms of life have gradually arisen out of lower." This statement is usually taken to imply the annihilation of the old Christian idea of the *special creation* of a Soul with each human being that is born. A moment's thought on the definition will show that it is itself a statement of special creation, the only difference between it and the theological idea being that it is in steps. To remove the offensive *special* character we have to remove the mysterious ability within the forms to respond at all to impact. Such removal would reduce the universe to a dead stop and nonentity. Sir William Barrett, in his essay on "The Creative Power of Thought," has followed this power of response to its most elementary manifestations, and has shown that it is due to the diffusion of *consciousness*

## THE SOUL EVOLUTION

in every atom of the universe.

In the strictest sense of the term this consciousness is "super-sensual." It does not depend on physical forms for life: it, itself, is the fountain of life: in its totality it embraces all possibilities of differential evolution: it is the spring of all action; the  $\alpha$  quantity of *involution* whose recognition alone makes intelligible and complete any system that would explain the universe.

Let us endeavour to illustrate the operation of this law of evolution in terms of mathematics.

Assuming the Absolute totality to be a unit (1), any process of involution (involvement or entanglement) can only take place within itself, and can only be represented in the form of a fraction. A unit raised to any power of itself remains a unit ( $1^5 = 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$ ). Here we have a figure of the metaphysical truth that the Absolute unity can never be brought down from its level: it remains transcendent. Assume now that the unit separates into seven parts. Seven new units are established, but they are not absolute units: they are relative units, dependent on one another, and owing their existence to the basic Absolute unit. We do not figure this division as  $7 \times 1$ , for that would give 7 absolute units, which is impossible. We figure each part as  $\frac{1}{7}$ , thus symbolising the dependence of the fraction from the unit, and shadowing the imma-

## FOOTSTEPS OF FREEDOM

nence of the Absolute unity in its constituents. If we divide each seventh into sevenths, we shall have 49 parts, and we may carry the process from stage to stage, each time we multiply the fraction giving us a greater total, an expanding multiplicity, but with a corresponding contraction of the value of each new relative unit. A child, not knowing the value of money, might prefer 48 farthings to one shilling, or 192 pies to a rupee, but a shopkeeper would not be induced by number to give any more sweets than for the single silver coin. So in the process of involution, the one became many—not many *ones*, but many relative units, increasing in number and in the illusion of separateness and individual importance as they shared less and less directly the essence of the Absolute unity. Evolution is the reversal of the process. Mathematically speaking, it absorbs one of the elements, and raises the efficiency of the remainder; and this process will go on until unity is reached.

So is it in the life of the Soul. Wherever a number of persons meet for a worthy purpose, there is a withdrawal from involvement in the details of the separate lives: a new fraction of less multiplicity and greater potency is created: this is the secret of the power of organisation. So too, in the individual, the nearer the active consciousness approaches the Soul-level, the level of abstract thought, the farther it recedes from

## THE SOUL EVOLUTION

the illusory separations and false evolutions of the emotional and physical degrees of life, and experiences an enhancement of power. Mind asserts its influence over matter, not by opposing material power with material power, but by drawing nearer to the omnipotence of the Absolute unit.

This process of evolution is in constant operation. Physical science sees it in forms; psychological science sees it in consciousness. Its tendency is towards groupings on ever higher levels; towards reducing the fractional figures as to number, and increasing them as to value. Neither nature nor man can escape the sum which the Master Mathematician is working out. We cannot delay it beyond His Will: we *may* expedite it by the stimulation in humanity of a love of Beauty, a participation in altruistic activity, a joy in the great simplicities; and by the realisation in ourselves individually of the stable and fundamental elements of our true nature, by moving stage by stage back from the fractions of the self in oscillating emotion and undisciplined thinking, towards the unit of the Self.







